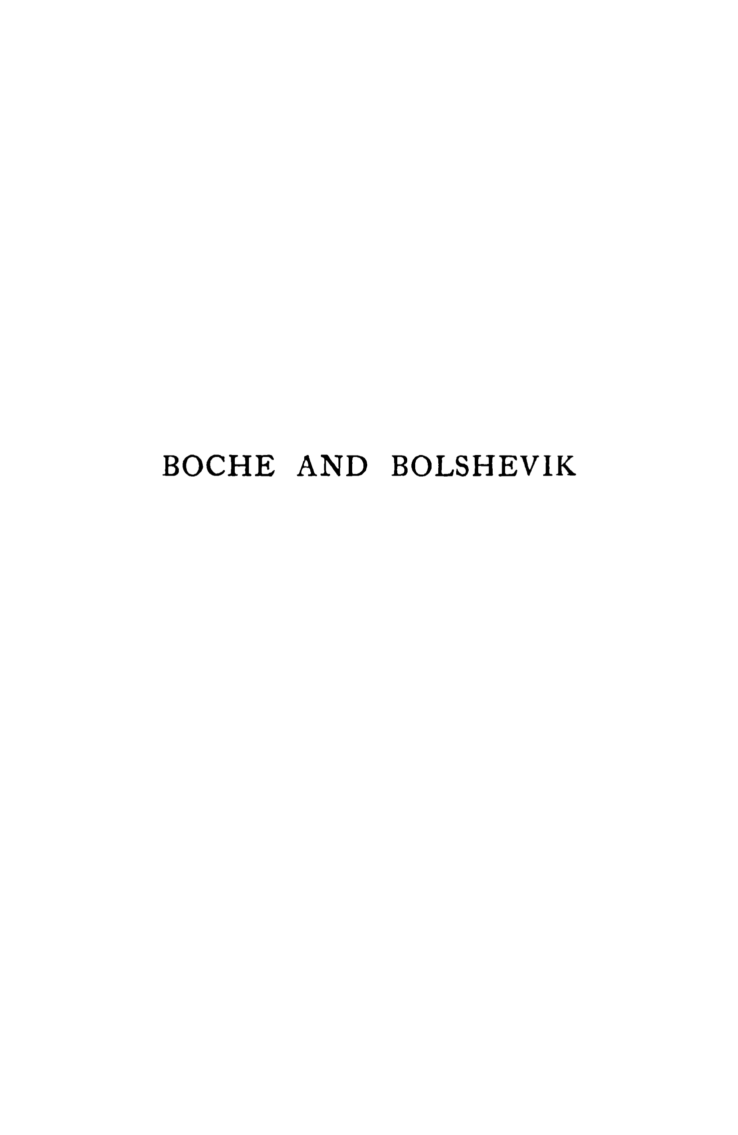
BOCHE & BOLSHEVIK

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EXPERIENCES OF AN ENGLISHMAN IN THE GERMAN ARMY AND IN RUSSIAN PRISONS

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PREFACE

The present book reprints a series of articles which appeared in the *China Illustrated Weekly* from November, 1918, to February, 1919. This accounts for certain allusions, which I have not altered, as they are unimportant and fill no large space in the narrative. My thanks are due to H. G. Woodhead, Esq., the Editor of the *China Illustrated Weekly*, for the help he has given me in publishing these articles.

H. T. PRICE.

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CHAPTER I

MANUFACTURING PUBLIC OPINION

WHEN war broke out I was picking late cherries in our garden near the Rhine. A boy came by with the news on a flysheet. I ran and bought a paper and then told our gardener's wife. Her face went pinched and white, for she was the mother of many sons; but she only pulled her shawl a little tighter round her shoulders, and then, with the immemorial stoicism of the peasant, turned to her work again. She remembered the days of "seventy," when, as she often used to tell us, the regimental bands had to play their loudest in order to drown the sobs of the women as the troops marched to the station.

No such memories haunted the bulk of the German people. The whole of Bonn was delirious with joy at the declaration of war. They were absolutely certain of victory, and already treated foreigners, and especially Englishmen, with withering contempt. They seemed to be glad to throw off the mask they had been wearing for years. The

Great Day had arrived when Germany was to reach a pinnacle of glory unattained by any other nation in history. She was to become the arbitress of the destinies of the whole human race. This, at any rate, was the feeling that chiefly struck foreign observers. But I do not think we shall ever do justice to the Germans until we realize that for most of them the war came as a surprise. To the very last they thought the crisis would pass over as so many others had done. I can best illustrate the prevailing mood by what happened to myself. The day before Germany was declared in a state of war, I bade good-bye to my students for the term, and said I hoped no war would prevent us from meeting again in October as usual. I was answered by a loud burst of laughter. Yet even while I was speaking a detachment of troops was marching past the University in order to take up a position of guarding the bridge across the Rhine. The intoxication of the Germans at the opening of hostilities was the natural reaction from the long years of strain and preparation for war, and it was the more violent because it was so unexpected.

It is difficult for Englishmen to understand how all those years the Germans lived in the shadow of war. Every student of German affairs knows that the Government controlled the organs of public opinion and with what fine cunning and persistence it infected the national mind with its

doctrine of war. I am concerned here only to give a few instances of how the poison worked. When I came back to Bonn from my first summer vacation in 1905, my chief asked me what people in England were saying about the war. "What war?" I answered. "Why," he said, "the war between England and Germany." So accustomed had they become to the idea of this war, that long before it broke out, they spoke of it as something present and real. Extremely instructive were the antics of the German Government after the publication of the interview with the Kaiser in the *Daily Telegraph* in 1908. It will be remembered that the German people were furious because in this interview the Kaiser denied that the German Fleet was to be used against England, alleging it was for use against Japan. The nation felt it had been tricked, because it would not have spent so much money to provide against a war with Japan. To allay the excitement, the Government sent round an article to the little provincial papers, intimating that the Kaiser's interview was a well-intentioned effort to befool the English. Then it went on to say in so many words: our fleet is not intended to be used against Japan, it is intended to be used if England should ever introduce Protection and Colonial Preference. Our fleet must be so strong that England would never dare to embark on such a policy. This article did not, of course, appear in the leading journals, because

then it would have attracted too much attention in England. As it is, it appears to have gone unnoticed.

But this affair of the interview had another and more interesting sequel. One of the Kaiser's sons, Prince Oskar, was at the time a student at Bonn. Every November the Rector of the University gave a great inauguration dinner, and the guest of highest rank present had to propose the toast of the Kaiser. Usually the Princes request some one else to do it for them, because most of them are incapable of making even the simplest speech. But, to the surprise of everybody, this year Prince Oskar rose to speak, and the wonder grew when it became obvious that the speech had been written for him by his father. In veiled language, the meaning of which, however, was clear, the interview was thrown over, and we were told to prepare for war. Now, Prince Oskar had been my pupil, and the fact that I should be present at the dinner had not escaped the attention of whoever prepared the speech. So after he had sat down, Prince Oskar tore off a corner of his menu card and sent me a note to the effect that he wished to drink my health. We accordingly raised glasses and drank to one another across the crowded hall. I still have the "scrap of paper" in my possession—a lasting testimony to the tortuous diplomacy of the Hohenzollerns.

This is, perhaps, the best place to state what

I learned of the character of Prince Oskar and his associates. He had been very strictly brought up, in seclusion, somewhere in the country. So well had he been looked after that till he was twenty-one he had never been in Berlin alone. He had all the traditional piety of the Prussian Junker, the piety that made Bismarck, in applying for the hand of his future wife, write a long letter stating his religious beliefs in full. I can best illustrate his character by repeating his argument in favour of the existence of ghosts. "What I say is, with God everything is possible. If He wanted to make ghosts, He could. What is the difficulty, then? Of course there are such things as ghosts!" The ingenuous youth failed to see that by the same reasoning one could prove the existence of griffins, dragons, the unicorn, winged horses, sea-serpents, and Mrs. Harris. He was generally considered by the professors at Bonn the most intelligent Hohenzollern that had visited the University. His conversation was about country life and sport, and, above all, the army. He was a soldier through and through, and the army was his life. He often expressed a wish to die on the battlefield, shot through the heart. This wish has not been gratified. His health broke down in the first year of the war, and he was invalided. Afterwards he was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Home Forces. He has distinguished himself in this position by

starving his soldiers and then telling them to go to the front if they wanted anything to eat. His God was "our good old German God," a Being as horrible as Moloch and as stupid as Mumbo-Jumbo. But at any rate Oskar was sincere, and there are no scandals about him as there are about the Crown Prince, who, to quote the German phrase, departed from Bonn like the devil, leaving a smell behind him.

Prince Oskar may be forgiven for the crudeness of his religion, because his teachers were even worse than he. At the end of the Semester he used to give a dinner to all his tutors. The chief guest was one Zorn, a Prussian who had been imported from North Germany to teach the Princes law, because the Rhinelanders were not supple enough. Zorn twice represented Germany at the Hague Conferences, and I believe he is a recognized authority on International Law. During the dinner the Prince had occasion to speak of his sister's aptitude for mathematics. "Why," he said, "she is quite silly; she actually loves the stuff." Zorn immediately chimed in. "My daughter is like that; my daughter is silly too. She *likes* mathematics. When I get home I shall tell her how silly Her Royal Highness your sister is, and I am sure she will be most sympathetically touched to hear that Her Royal Highness is as silly as herself." Thus are compliments paid in the Land of Culture. Afterwards

we went out on to the terrace, and Zorn monopolized the conversation. He delivered two lectures, the first a warning against humour. He advised us never to make jokes in our lectures, humour and science being incompatible. He added, "I never joke." Then he went on to prove the impossibility of doubting the existence of God. He railed against mathematicians for being atheists, although they every day assume the existence of quantities without proof. Why could they not assume the existence of God? Needless to say this champion of Prussian piety was one of the first to rush into print with a defence of Germany's action in Belgium. I have no doubt that, if he is alive now, he is still writing pamphlets in honour of frightfulness. When we remember that their instructors, the very flower of the nation, men with European reputations for scholarship, are of such common clay, can we be surprised at what the Hohenzollerns do?

Much of the talk that went on that night is interesting now, especially in the light of what has happened since. Zorn frankly admitted that the ill-success of the Hague Conferences was due to Germany. "Much more might have been attained," he said, "if only *we* had wished." His estimates of the English representatives are worth recording. "Fry was only a good frame to the picture. For Satow we had the greatest respect. He was a hard nut to crack. He gave us more

trouble than all your men put together." But he spoke with most admiration of Fisher. It was a curious thing, because Zorn speaks no English and Fisher apparently no German, but such was the open breeziness and cordiality of Fisher's manner, that the two became fast friends. Then the talk wandered to the relations between France and Germany, and we skated on thin ice, because both an Englishman and Frenchman were present. But it was obvious that an attempt was being planned to draw France over to Germany's side by representing to her that an alliance with England was not worth while, as she would only be pulling the English chestnuts out of the fire. Finally, one of the Prince's aides, Major Graf von Dohna, gave me his impressions of the Boxer expedition. "Of course," he said, "each army thinks its officers the best. We think ours the best, as you do yours. But there is one thing where you are undoubtedly superior to us, and that is in the relations between the officers and the men. Your officers get on with their men much better than ours do." He deplored the English attachment to sport, saying that the Tommies, whenever they had a free moment, got out a football and began kicking it about. But the Japs spent every minute of their spare time watching the German drill, greedy to learn whatever new details they could.

To come back to where I started from. No

one could deny the strong agitation going on against England, but not till after the Morocco crisis of 1911 did I think it meant war. We are now so much accustomed to the idea of war that it is hard to realize that there was a time when it seemed fantastic. Panic-mongering is a favourite sport of European Governments, and the methods employed in Germany were not so different from those of other countries. Moreover, a considerable body of public opinion was opposed to war. Those great export houses whose business depended upon England's good-will, were especially eager to maintain friendly relations. The Kaiser and his family were unpopular in Rhineland, perhaps because this province has never been thoroughly Prussianized, perhaps for other reasons. When the Crown Prince paid a visit to Cologne, once, no preparations were undertaken to give him a grand reception, on the ground that as yet he had done nothing for Germany. Things never seemed to me to be so bad between England and Germany as they had been between England and Russia, and I imagined there would always be enough common sense in both countries to avoid the supreme folly of war. It is easy to see now that I underestimated the power of the court and rated far too high the influence of public opinion. I forgot, too, how easy it is to manufacture public opinion, when occasion demands.

In 1911 I married, got naturalized (after many

fruitless endeavours to obtain a post in England), and settled down to spending my life in Germany with the full inner certainty that the peace would be kept. And then came the Morocco debates in the Reichstag, and it was obvious to every one that war was inevitable.

The Morocco crisis was admirably utilized by the German Government. It definitely swung round the great mass of public opinion against England. Its firstfruits were an increase in the Naval Estimates which otherwise would have been impossible. The Government took courage and became far more cynical in its agitation than before. For instance, one year the International Yacht Races were held in Germany. Several English yachts took part and an English peer gave a cup to be competed for. The Kaiser, of course, attended and greeted the English with a speech of welcome, in which the usual platitudes were said. Immediately the German provincial papers were flooded with articles pointing out that the Kaiser was bound as host to say something nice to Germany's guests, and that his words of friendship really meant nothing and were not to be taken seriously. The Government understood the fine art of inflaming the people's passions and so contrived their news that everything that happened in England seemed to be a personal insult to Germany. For example, the launching of a new battleship would be announced

in thick type and the ordinary Philistine reading his newspaper would somehow get the feeling that here was another sly trick of perfidious Albion. Everything that tended to the discredit of England was dragged in and made much of.

The vagaries of the Suffragettes and the dangers of the Irish situation were Heaven-sent gifts for the Germans. When the Germans were accused of ravaging Belgium, they answered with a detailed calculation, proving, to their own satisfaction at any rate, that they had not destroyed half so much as the Suffragettes. The political situation was exploited so as to make the Germans believe that the English were incapable of any great effort. They could not even control their women! How could they face the Germans, then? Every month the reviews proved that the British Empire would fall to pieces at the first touch of war. At the same time the blame for the enmity between England and Germany was entirely thrown on England. England wanted all the German colonies. England wanted German trade. England wanted a war so as to divert public attention from the Suffragettes and the wild Irish. Germany desired nothing so much as to live in peace, only her wicked neighbours would not let her. The Lichnowsky Memoirs had not yet been published, and Dr. Mühlon was still an official at Krupp's.

Conversations, that I was able to enjoy from

time to time with official persons, threw a lurid light on all this agitation. The building of strategic railways all converging on the Belgian frontier was a matter of frequent discussion. I remember at a wedding-breakfast in 1913 sitting at the same table with a young lieutenant of artillery who had just been commanded to a munition factory near Bonn. He looked pale and worn-out, and explained that the factory was working day and night. Germany was two years ahead of France and Russia in its preparations and, as soon as it was ready, would go to war. We asked when that would be. "When the changes in the Kiel Canal and Cologne railway station are finished," he answered. "At present our new Dreadnoughts cannot pass through the canal, and we cannot mobilize our troops quickly enough with Cologne station as it is." He was the best of prophets. The rebuilding of the canal and of the station were both finished in July, 1914, and in that month Germany declared war.

But, you will say, how in the face of these facts can you declare that the war took the German people by surprise? Well, we all know that we are going to die, but we should be surprised to die just now. For the Germans, the war was a watched pot that had forgotten to boil. The newspapers were managed with exquisite cleverness during the crisis preceding the outbreak of hostilities. The German Government

was going to proclaim war. Very well, then, they said, let us represent the matter as if peace were fairly certain, and as if the only obstacles in the way are the contumacy of a petty country like Serbia and the corrupt ambitions of the Russian Grand Dukes. On the very day war was declared, the *Cologne Gazette* solemnly assured the Belgian people that the stories as to German intentions of invading Belgium were only British or French inventions. "You want to know how many soldiers there are in the great camps near the Belgian frontier? We can assure you there are none at all. These camps are quite empty." The German people believed that a great struggle for peace was going on, in which, owing to the fear of the German sword, the peace-makers were getting the upper hand. They were led to believe that the German Emperor had so generously embraced the cause of Peace, that the balance of chances inclined against War. Peace was dangled before their eyes like a fair apple, attainable, but tantalizingly just out of reach. And then when war did come, the German people turned with all the fury of disappointment, not upon their own Government, but upon Russia for supporting Serbia, and upon France and England for joining her. They had been taught ever since they were little boys at school that the righteous development of Germany was being thwarted at every turn by England, who had

managed to hem them in with a ring of foes. With a deep breath of relief they drew the sword, confident in their ability to hew down whoever stood in their way. "Better an end to horror, than a horror without end," says the German proverb, and in this spirit they went to war. But even Germans can be tricked too often. I do not think we need take much thought about how to punish the Kaiser and the other criminals responsible for this war. We need only hand them over to their nation, confident that the people whom they have so long befooled and fed with lies will know how to deal with them. Nothing is less likely than that the German people will forgive those who, *avec un cœur léger*, plunged them into the frightful catastrophe that befell them. I must apologize for insisting at such length upon the insincerities and crooked ways of the German Government, but I do insist, because at the present time it is necessary to understand quite clearly the kind of people with whom we have to deal. And while explaining how the German people were misled, I am offering no excuse for the spirit in which they conducted the war, once it began. The Government may have ordered the atrocities in the first place, but the nation has always set the seal of its approval on the actions of the Government after the deed, and so the nation has made itself jointly responsible.

CHAPTER II

LIES AND SPIES

War having finally broken out, the Government, of course, did not relax its hold on the Press. The early days brought a fine crop of fantastic inventions. The utmost was done to heighten the people's illusions. The semi-official telegrams declared that England would remain true to its time-honoured principle of making money out of other people's difficulties and abstain from taking part. This was at a time when Germany had already sown mines in English waters, arrested every English sailor in Germany, and cut the Jamaica cable. Japan was said to be about to conclude an alliance with Germany. A Frenchman was alleged to have poisoned wells in Alsace-Lorraine. While the Government invented the absurd story of a French aeroplane having been seen over Nuremberg before the war broke out, they quite concealed the fact that in the early days of the war French aeroplanes really did visit Coblenz. My authority is a priest who nearly lost his life from the shrapnel of the German air defences. The Government did not even spare its own citizens. A circumstantial report appeared in all the newspapers to the

effect that the innkeeper Nicolai, of Cochem, and his son had been put to death for trying to blow up a railway tunnel on the Moselle. The affair created a sensation, because Nicolai was known far and wide for the excellence of his wines. The report was allowed to run for some time, and then the public were told that there had indeed been some charge of the sort against Nicolai, but upon investigation it had been withdrawn. And if you ask why a simple private citizen should be libelled in this way, the answer is easy—it was to heighten the prevailing spy-fever by suggesting that spies were to be found everywhere, in the least likely places.

For from the beginning the Government began a merciless campaign against foreign spies, and let it be known that the whole country was swarming with French and Russian agents in disguise. The mob was given to understand that they had practically a free hand in dealing with any of these agents they should meet. A frenzied spy-mania sprang up and no Frenchman or Russian was safe in the streets. In a certain hospital at Bonn twenty foreigners were being treated at the same time as a result of the injuries inflicted by the mob. In Cologne, at a particular street corner, fifty men were mobbed in one day. I myself saw one such scene. An unfortunate Russian had been recognized in the street, and the police had come up just in time to

save his life and were trying to get him to the police-station. The people all the while surged round from every direction, brandishing their sticks and uttering that peculiar mob-yell which is more blood-curdling to listen to than the howl of a pack of wolves. It is true that by such methods a certain number of spies were detected; but a far larger number of innocent persons suffered, and those mostly Germans. The mob thought a spy would be likely to try and disguise himself by putting on some sort of uniform, so they set upon anybody in official dress whose looks did not please them. One friend of ours, who was wearing an old Landsturm uniform, from which some buttons were missing, was three times hauled by the mob to the police-station. Another friend was a nurse, wearing the regulation cap and veil, and she was taken so often to the police-station that at last the officer lost all patience and drove the mob forth with such curses as only a German can swear. The priest who told me about the air-raid on Coblenz, in addition to nearly being killed by stray shrapnel, was attacked by hooligans, and but for the timely arrival of the police would have been robbed of all he possessed. The most amusing case (from a non-German point of view) was that of a member of the Reichstag on his way to the historic session at the Royal Palace on August 4. He was a little stout man with a

peaked imperial beard, and he was wearing some sort of unfamiliar Court uniform that looked more French than German. The mob set upon him, threw him to the ground, and by the time the police intervened had all but kicked him to death.

I may add two stories of how real spies were detected—and this owing to the neglect of the merest trifle. The bridge over the Rhine at Bonn is very carefully watched, and every vehicle must be accompanied across by a soldier. A motor-car was once being thus conveyed, with two officers in it, when something unfamiliar about them attracted the attention of the guard. He looked at them more closely, and discovered that with the uniform of the artillery they were wearing the spiked helmets of the infantry. (Artillery helmets end in a ball.) He had the car stopped, and it transpired that the two men were officers in the French Army on a special mission to the interior of Germany. They were tried and shot the same day.

The other instance is of an oversight equally trivial. A lady was travelling in the train from Aix-la-Chapelle to Cologne, when her attention was caught by the label of a London tailor sewn in another lady's jacket which was dangling from the rack. The owner of the jacket was continually running into the next compartment to have a talk with a wounded officer, whose arm

was in a sling. "She was like a nervous rabbit," my informant said. When the train pulled up in Cologne station a detachment of soldiers was waiting on the platform, and they at once arrested the wounded officer. He was an English spy, and his bandages were full of maps and other incriminating documents. (The names of all persons in uniform who board a train are registered, and by the time they reach their destination it is known whether they are *bona fide* travellers or not. A telegram does the rest.) It was obvious that the wearer of the English jacket was also a spy working together with the man who had been arrested. At first the German lady could not bring herself to give information which must inevitably cost the life of a woman. She hesitated a long time, but in the end duty to the Vaterland prevailed, and she told the authorities. Meanwhile, however, the Englishwoman had left the station and was speeding away in a taxi. But the soldiers rushed out and sounded a peculiar signal, at which every vehicle within hearing is bound to stop and wait further orders. The Englishwoman had not got far enough away, she was arrested, and she, no doubt, suffered the extreme penalty.

To return from this digression. The German Government worked on the feelings of the people, not only through the spy mania, but in all sorts of crooked and underhand ways. It was given out that Rhineland was going to be invaded by

the French through Belgium, and that in this flat country the French would have an easy time. For the first week or two of the war people in Rhineland were distinctly nervous. Learned professors used to discuss what would happen if the French came to Bonn, whether any one would be left alive, or any building would survive their fury. It seems ridiculous, when one looks back upon it, but it all served the purpose of the Government very well. It directed the rage of the people against the foreign enemy and away from their own rulers, and it heightened the "Kriegstimmung." In time the Government could play upon the people just as they liked. I remember once that reports appeared in the Dutch papers that 600 men a day were joining Kitchener's Army in London, and 2000 a day in the whole of England. The German newspapers reported that only 600 men from the whole of London had joined, and from all England only 2000. (This was in September.) The people were immensely relieved, they thought that England was already sorry she had joined in the war, and would only put up a half-hearted fight. I was spending the evening with acquaintances when the news arrived, and a bottle of wine was immediately fetched up from the cellar to celebrate it. In this connection I need scarcely refer to the speech of John Burns that was specially forged, except to say that some German books still refer to it as that "much-

disputed" speech, and then proceed to quote large extracts from it.

Especial pains were taken to vilify Sir Edward Grey. A story appeared in the *Cologne Gazette* that at a dinner-party in July, 1914, Sir Edward Grey had been speaking of the troubled political situation in England, and had finished up, "Only a war can save us now." Another story was that at the critical moment in the negotiations he had telegraphed to Petrograd the one word "Now." Russia had immediately mobilized, and so made war inevitable. Or another method of attack was employed. It was put about that Grey was only a nincompoop, a weak man, the tool of others cleverer than himself, and the real villain of the piece was Nicholson. It was my favourite joke to ask the Germans who this Nicholson was. Grey was the best-hated man in Germany. The curses heaped on his head, however, only used to amuse me, specially as they always pronounced his name to rhyme with "cry."

Extraordinary care was taken to write up the navy. Germany's honour was felt to be especially concerned here, and defeat was doubly bitter, because it came from the hands of Britain. I was in Kiel during the war, and heard a great deal about the magnificent espionage system of England. I was informed that the English Admiralty knew beforehand down to the smallest unit what ships composed the German Fleet that

fought at Dogger Bank. Their spies watched the Kiel Canal and managed to convey the news to the English Admiralty before the ships were well out to sea. While at Kiel they had few illusions as to England's naval strength, it was different in the country at large. Reverses were never admitted, and the German people thought that their fleet really never had been defeated. Heligoland Bight, Dogger Bank, and even the Falkland Islands were thought to be glorious victories. It is true that no German ships survived the battle of the Falkland Islands; but a report appeared in all the German papers saying that the English had already been completely beaten in this battle when the Japanese appeared, and it was they who polished off Von Spee. Losses were concealed in the most ridiculous way. The *Friedrich Carl* sank in full view of the Russians, and its loss was announced in their official bulletins. Yet the German Government never let their own people know of it. This policy of secrecy was carried too far, and sometimes irritated the fleet. Once a cruiser was badly injured in the Baltic, but she managed to make her way to Kiel, steering backwards, and all the time dodging submarines and mines. It was a superb piece of seamanship. The Government never said a word about it, for the simple reason that they did not want the public to know how strong the enemy was in the Baltic. But the men

concerned were inclined to grumble, because they felt the public did not honour them as they deserved. There is a great deal more I could say on this subject, but what I know I learned under conditions that make it impossible for me to break silence. Enough to say that the tactics of the Government were successful. The confidence of the nation in the German Fleet—and also of many neutrals—remained unbounded. A favourite saying among the German soldiers was, "We overrated many things, but the English Navy most of all; it has done nothing."

The successes of the army were written up in much the same way. For instance, the winter battle at the Masurian Lakes was so announced as to appear three battles instead of one. First, part of the results were announced, then more, and then finally a complete account was given, but this was done in such a way that the people believed that three victories had been gained; and, as a matter of fact, the houses in Bonn were beflagged three times. One habit of the Germans is interesting to note at this particular moment. Whenever the Russians retreated, systematically destroying everything as they went, the German General Staff held up holy hands of horror. The Kaiser sent a special telegram about the "terrible but beautiful" sight of the ring of burning villages round Warsaw. The Germans forgot to say that these villages consisted for the most part of wooden

huts, easily rebuilt, and that not much of beauty or value was destroyed. It is interesting to note, too, just now, what measures of revenge the Germans took. Once in retreat the Russians were unable to bring away their stores of bread, so, in order to make them unfit for human food, they drenched them with petroleum. Hindenburg comes along, and is informed of it. "How thoughtful of the Russians!" he exclaimed. "We'll give it to their prisoners to eat." Which was done, with the result that many of them died. When the day of reckoning comes, and the criminals are brought before the bar, Hindenburg must not be forgotten. He is an East Prussian, and has conducted the war with a cruelty possible only to one of his race.

The most impudent forgeries in the German papers are the speeches attributed to the Kaiser. The utmost has been done to enhance his position in the eyes of the world and of his own subjects. When the war broke out, tradition demanded that he should address the Berlin crowd from the balcony of his palace. The German papers report him as having told the crowds to go home and pray. But the correspondent of the *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant* wrote that the Kaiser said nothing of the sort, and that his speech was full of the most "drastic expressions." The Kaiser and his family were presented to the people in a cloud of lies. When the Germans bombarded

Scarborough, it was put about that Prince Henry (the Kaiser's brother) had been very much against it, the idea being to insist on the chivalry of his nature. But he is a Prussian of the Prussians, a very Hindenburg of the sea. Allied papers have been inclined lately to jeer at the Kaiser, because none of his sons have fallen in action. This is a little unfair. One son at least has been wounded. Prince Eitel Fritz has gained the admiration of all his men by his desperate bravery. An N.C.O., who has fought under him, told me he seemed to seek death. Another N.C.O., who had been in the thick of it at Verdun, told me the Crown Prince was popular as a soldier, and had the knack of getting the most out of his men. The other German Princes have, on the whole, shown themselves worthy of their great positions, and have been an inspiration to their men. The Prince of Schaumburg-Lippe, of the Bonn Hussars, was renowned as a daring patrol-rider. These things I know from soldiers themselves, not from newspapers trying to write up the cause of absolutism. The Kaiser's family has not had an altogether easy time of it during the war. Many are known to be English in their sympathies, and it was even said to be fashionable in Court circles to speak German with an English accent. A sister of the Kaiser lives at Bonn, and for an unfortunate remark she made she had to undergo the rebuke of plebeians. At the beginning of the

war there was a great rush of Bonn women to be nurses. They adopted a most unbecoming uniform, the veil in particular being a monstrous black thing that reminded you of a funeral mute. The Princess said they ought to have a prettier veil, "like those they have in England." The reply was priceless. She was informed, "We are all good Germans here, your Royal Highness."

In one direction the censorship exercised a healthy influence. When war broke out, the German hatred of the enemy found the coarsest and most disgusting expression. For instance, the *Bonner Zeitung* (a newspaper written by the professors for the professors of the University), reporting the shooting of a Russian lady for espionage, added: "And now the carrion of her carcase is rotting in its well-deserved grave." (I disdain to render the original more exactly.) Picture-postcards and flysheets were issued in thousands, in which all the resources of the filthiest imagination in Europe were employed to vilify the enemy. But one day they disappeared like magic from the shop-windows, and the newspapers took on a cleaner tone. After the news of the destruction of Louvain came, the papers were inclined to exult and glorify the deed. But a sign from the Government was enough to keep their enthusiasm within bounds. It is the habit to laugh at the Germans for their slavish press, but I am certain they would not have held

out so long as they have done under any other system. Only in England is it possible for the populace to be daily fed with wild stories of the incompetence, stupidity, or treachery of the Government, and yet to continue to prosecute the war with undiminished vigour.

CHAPTER III

THE TREATMENT OF THE ENGLISH IN GERMANY

It is curious how much sympathy there was for England even months after the beginning of the war. Ladies whom we knew had always had their dresses made in London, and asserted their intention of doing so again as soon as the war was over. Others, who were strongly attracted by the freedom of English life, still felt the charm in spite of all that had happened. And when they were in the company of people they could trust, they used to say how much they were longing for the war to end in order that they might resume the pleasant relations which had been broken off. They never doubted that the English would meet them halfway. Such of my students as were in England when war was declared were loud in praise of the courtesy with which they had been treated. Communication was possible with England through Holland, and these students were still receiving letters breathing assurances of friendship. The German Government had at the very beginning laid their hands on the personal possessions of all Englishmen who had left Germany. I tried in vain to rescue the property of my friends who had fled at the

outbreak of war. The War Office had been there before me. On the other hand, the officials in England were not so quick. My students were getting their effects sent out to them through Holland without any hindrance.

It was curious to notice how things English had risen in public estimation when once they were hard to get. Huntley and Palmer's biscuits, for instance, ruled the German market in time of peace. No German biscuit can be compared with them for a minute. An officer we knew wrote home asking his mother to send him out some biscuits. She trudged all over Bonn in search of Huntley and Palmer's. At one shop they offered her German ones, saying they were just as good. She flared up at once. "Do you think," she said, "I would send German biscuits to my son at the front?" Finally the indomitable old lady managed to get a tin of English biscuits, and she sent them off. All the mourning crêpe, arm-bands, and so on, worn in Germany were imported from England, even long after war was declared. A merchant told me that the Germans could not manufacture it, they simply had to have English crêpe! Jokes were often cut at the expense of the business instincts of the English; they got up a war to kill German soldiers in order to sell mourning to their mothers and wives. I could hear of nothing else being imported from England except English books. All the new publications

on the English market arrived regularly and could be inspected at the University Library. Even the little propaganda booklets of the Clarendon Press were there. I subscribed to the *Morning Post* through a Dutch bookseller and for nearly a year received every number, except the one describing the attack on Scarborough. That was suppressed.

Although I had nothing to complain of, Englishwomen married to Germans were subject to the bitterest persecution. Coffee parties would be formed, to which they would be invited, and then each guest present in turn, by those little stabs that women know so well how to inflict, would see how she could torture the "Engländerin." A certain "*Professorenfrau*" we knew wanted to try the same tactics on me. She made the most extravagant efforts to convert me to her way of thinking. When everything else had failed she even visited the members of my household and suggested they should make my life a hell to me until they had brought me round to the German point of view. Then she tried to entrap me. She was putting on the usual pose, asserting that Germany had never expected that England would make war on her and that nothing had surprised her more.

"Well, then," I assured her, "how do you explain the fact that *four days before the declaration of war* Germany arrested all the English

sailors in the country, even those in little sailing vessels far up the Rhine, as well as other Englishmen she thought it desirable to keep?" I gave her the names of acquaintances of mine who were put in the common jail without being accused of anything—and this before the declaration of war. She refused to believe it, and requested me to give her a written statement over my signature. This was the trick always played by German agents on Belgians in neutral countries. If they made a written declaration and signed their names to it, their families in Belgium would suffer for it; while if they refused—then they were branded as liars. I, of course, refused, and the woman broke out into a storm of abuse. I have never seen a more horrible figure, even among the drunken viragos of Whitechapel. At last, fearing for my eyes, as her fingers were obviously itching to be at me, I bowed, and left the room as hastily as was consistent with dignity.

But though I never took any trouble to conceal my English sympathies—in fact, they were notorious—I had nothing to complain of except from this woman. It is with especial pleasure that I record that my relations with my students were never so cordial as in this last Semester. My correspondence was censored from early days, and the essays my students sent me all went through the Censor's hands. This caused some hindrance to the work, but they simply thought it a good

joke that the Censor should have to read their essays. (Letters addressed to me were always censored; letters addressed to my wife never were. It is a curious example of the limitations of official intelligence.) My colleagues and other friends, when they discussed the war with me, were quite fair, and seemed only interested in discovering the English point of view. Some of my acquaintances were good enough to inform me, with all the exactness and conscientiousness of German pedantry, what they thought of England, and then to add they did not want that to interfere with our relations. If I laughed at their clumsiness, I valued their good will. The professors of English throughout Germany were the bitterest. They did not help their countrymen to understand England at all. One man told me he was going to learn to speak English with an American accent and insist on his students doing the same. Another spent his time translating a Dutch book, proving that Germany was superior in material resources to the whole of the British Empire.

Of course, although private friendships might remain unaltered, it was dangerous to speak English in public. Americans had an especially bad time. An acquaintance of mine had a tankard of beer emptied over his head for speaking English in a Bavarian restaurant. The populace used to invent the absurdest rumours about the English people living in Bonn. They

were all spies, they were all going to be arrested, they were all living in cellars, not daring to show their faces. The soldiers who were quartered on us from time to time used to bring a budget of these tales about me and amuse the servants with them.

The Government began their campaign against English trade at once. The Sunlight Soap Works passed into German hands in the first days of the war. What the terms were I never heard, but as it was a forced sale they could not have been generous. English insurance companies are popular in Germany, because they can be relied on to pay up. Holders of English policies were informed that they could change over into German companies, who thus acquired the bulk of the English business in Germany. The Government also tried to bring about an international agreement by which, in future, the lengths of sewing cotton should be given in metres and not in yards. They thought in this way to strike at the English control of the market. Certain companies, like Singer's Sewing Machine, were the objects of bitter and unscrupulous attacks in the press, and they, no doubt, lost a great many of their customers.

Englishmen in business were cheated in all sorts of underhand ways. One man I knew was taken to Ruhleben and left his wife (a German woman) in charge of the business. All her

assistants combined to render her life insupportable, and finally she had to give up the attempt to carry on. As a result, foreseen of course, the business was sold at a heavy loss. Another friend of mine had an especially tragic experience. For some years he had been the chemical director of a German factory, staying on there more out of friendship to the proprietor than for what he was making out of it. He was on his holidays in England all that fateful July before the war broke out, and on the 31st he received a wire from the factory, imploring him to return. He did so, and as soon as he arrived was informed that his salary had been reduced by one-half. He protested, and was curtly told he must economize and must cut down the number of his servants—one was quite enough in time of war. Then, in November, he was interned in Ruhleben. His firm promptly dismissed him and refused to pay his salary any longer, although he had the usual contract providing for six months' pay in lieu of notice. In December the German Government let him go back to Bonn for a few days to see if he could regain his position. Those Englishmen who were kept on in their old posts were being released from Ruhleben. His firm would not take him, they had other ends in view. He had in his possession a book containing a number of chemical formulæ. These formed practically his stock-in-trade and were extremely valuable. Some were old family secrets handed

down from father to son, others were the results of his own independent research. The firm tried to cajole him out of his formulæ, but, failing in that, started an action at law against him for the possession of the book. He knew nothing about it till one day a representative of the firm appeared at Ruhleben, and in the same breath informed him of the action, that he had lost it, and that he must deliver up the book for some time. He did so. Whether he ever got it back again I do not know. In any case his firm was in possession of all his secrets without paying him a penny for them. It throws a curious light on "German efficiency"—and in chemistry, too!—that they have to resort to such measures to steal an Englishman's knowledge. I need scarcely comment on the difference between German and English ideas of justice. In Germany, the Englishman condemned in his absence, unheard; in England, every German, even Krupp, represented by the best counsel money can buy, and his case carefully and patiently listened to.

One other instance of ill-treatment I add. It is rather important and I have not seen it referred to in any publication, although some of the victims must already be in England. It is asserted that when war broke out there was a sort of agreement between the English and German Governments to the effect that male subjects of military age in either country should be free to return

home up to August 11. After that date they would not be allowed to leave the country. Now, it was easy for Germans to leave England—the trains were running, and the Dutch service of ships was working just as in peace time. In Germany it was quite different. Twenty-four hours after the declaration of war the whole of the railways were taken over by the military authorities and used solely for the purposes of mobilization. Englishmen, therefore, who happened to be in Germany, had to stay just where they were. But some enterprising Englishmen in Cologne endeavoured to charter a Dutch steamer in order to go down the Rhine on her to Rotterdam. After protracted negotiations they succeeded. But they had to face so many difficulties that they did not reach Wesel, the last big place in Germany on the Rhine, till midnight of August 11. As they had exceeded their time, they were all taken prisoners and sent to Sennelager. No preparations had been made to receive them, there were no huts or buildings to shelter them, there were not even any tents. To make matters worse, the rain came down in a steady downpour for two days. They themselves were wet through to the skin, and even their good leather suit-cases were sodden and the contents ruined by the rain. After a little while the Englishmen were sent back home again until it was time for them to go to Ruhleben.

CHAPTER IV

IN THE ARMY

Before I became naturalized I went into the question of military service with especial care. An old friend of mine had for many years been at the head of a Recruiting Department. I went to him and laid the case before him, and he assured me categorically that in no event should I ever be called upon to serve in a war against England. Other people I consulted confirmed what he had said, and their testimonies removed the chief obstacle in my mind to naturalization. When the war broke out, no one ever dreamed that untrained men of my age, even Germans, would be called up. People remembered the days of 1870, which seemed such a tremendous war, when not even all the men available were sent to the front. But as the winter of 1914 deepened and the strain on Germany's resources of man-power grew more and more severe, it became evident that no one of military age would escape service. At the beginning of March, 1915, all the able-bodied men of Germany were called up for medical inspection. I was examined and declared fit for the infantry.

So, indeed, was every one else who was sound on his legs, including one-eyed men. A friend of mine who could not see across the room without his glasses was sent into the infantry, his eyes not even being looked at. Most of the other men were sent to the artillery, and one very bandy-legged man to the airship division. There was a general laugh at this; the man's legs were curved like a barrel, and it was certain that to walk the length of a Zeppelin would be the limit of his powers. The number of absolute rejections was infinitesimal. Afterwards, however, a few obtained a respite of some months. The municipalities seemed to find it easy to get exemption for their cases. For instance, one man was released because he was the janitor to the new municipal Girls' School. Even an English tribunal could scarcely have found a more trivial reason than that. Heads of large and important businesses managed to get off, but there was no exemption for the small man, even though military service meant for him absolute ruin. Bribery was frequent, and I knew of many cases where a timely present secured the transference of a soldier from the much-dreaded infantry to an artillery regiment. The German non-commissioned office staff are generally to be bought, except where an educated man happens to be appointed.

As soon as I was declared fit for the infantry, I took what steps I could to avoid military service. I protested to the Oberkommando at Coblenz,

giving them the full details of my history. The Rector of the University supported my protest with a very vigorous letter. As a result I was ordered to a regiment at Cassel, where Alsatians were being trained, who were destined like myself for the Russian front. If the Alsatians we had are typical of their race, then Germany's cause is hopeless in the two provinces. Our Alsatians could be divided into two classes—the talkative, who were few, and the reserved, who were many. The talkative oozed patriotism, they were bubbling over with it, and were so obviously insincere that the Germans thought of them only with contempt. By far the greater part were taciturn, gloomy, and hard. No exception could be taken to anything they did or said, but they were obviously with us but not of us. They never joined in singing our songs, except "O Strassburg," and that they used to sing with wonderful pathos. One little Alsatian was the butt of all our N.C.O.s. He was only half-witted, and had been sent into the interior of Germany because he was considered dangerous in Alsace. He was so stupid that he could never learn the simplest thing, and he was always going off to sleep wherever he might happen to be. Our instructors, with the brutality of the peasant, used to find in him a source of endless jokes. It was interesting to watch the other Alsatians while this was going on. They would go white and tremble with suppressed

emotion, and their eyes would flash dangerous fire. Afterwards, when they were sure that they were alone, they would gather round their unfortunate countryman and do their best to comfort him. When the poor man arrived at the front, he was at once sent back to the garrison as unfit for service in the field. Soldiers who fought in France in August, 1914, told me that their reception in Alsace was quite different from what it was in Germany. All along the railway line down to the boundary of Alsace they had been welcomed by cheering crowds, and gifts had been showered upon them at every station. But the moment they entered Alsace, everything was changed. They were met with cold looks and a dogged, sullen silence. The Alsatian regiments at the very beginning of the war were thrown across to the Russian front. The general testimony was that they did brilliant service there, and I could only gather one instance of desertion *en masse.*

My military career was rather abnormal, because at the very beginning I sprained my leg badly and had to go to hospital for six weeks. It was an interesting experience, because here I met soldiers from all fronts and learned a great deal about the war. We were miserably fed, and but for supplies from home would have starved. There was a curious comradeship among us. The working men used to come and say to me, " It isn't so bad for us, this starvation, but it must be awful for

you. You are not used to it." While I was there, the news of the sinking of the *Lusitania* came. A scene ensued that I shall never forget. Some one was reading all about it from a newspaper. First the bare news, at which there was some excitement, not much; then an account of the ammunition destroyed, at which there were cheers; and then the announcement of the deaths of women and children. The whole room went mad with delight; cheers, mingled with roars of laughter as at a good joke, were loud and long. The very horror of the massacre increased their satisfaction at it. A few French prisoners of war were being treated in the same hospital. We were forbidden to speak to them, and they always took their walks when we were indoors. But at some risk I managed to smuggle in French newspapers to them, especially one containing the announcement that Italy had declared war. They were obviously more cheerful after receiving these papers, and wanted to express their thanks, but I had to make them signs not to take any notice of me. The Germans at that time were said to be molly-coddling their French prisoners and trying to make them hate the English. At Freiburg a French prisoner of war used to give lectures at the University. He was conducted to his lecture-room by sentries with fixed bayonets, who waited outside the door, and then took him back again at the conclusion of the lecture.

I was kept far too long at the hospital. I enjoyed the opportunity of taking walks in the beautiful parks of Cassel, and, as I was not seriously ill, I could go to the theatre as often as I liked. From time to time the doctor asked me if my foot still troubled me. To a question so *naïf* there could be only one answer. One early learns to play the old soldier. Finally, however, he sent me back to the regiment with a recommendation that I should have an easy time of it for a week or so. For a whole fortnight I was employed on "Innendienst," that is to say, I worked in the barracks itself. Every morning we would go up to the lumber-room and fold blankets. When we had folded all that there were to be folded, the sergeant would come along, kick them all to the ground, and we had to do it over again. It was not malice on his part, but necessity. He had to find work for us, and that was all he could do. My companions were working-men, and they were very much amused because I wanted to work and objected to doing nothing all day. They were always quoting a proverb—

> "Wer Arbeit hat und sich nicht drückt,
> Der ist verrückt."
>
> ("Who has got work and does not shirk,
> He is a fool.")

The whole art of life, not only of these working-men but of all other German working-men I met,

could be summed up in that proverb. The mere fact of being idle afforded an exquisite pleasure to these people. The sergeant in time took pity on me and dispensed me from the necessity of coming at all. And so my poor feet, which were supposed to be too weak for marching, used to carry me over hill and dale, by forest and meadow, through all the surroundings of Cassel. By the time I had finished, I was "some" malingerer.

It would take me too long to detail all the delightful accidents that befell me. Suffice it to say that it was not till the middle of July that I began my full training, and on the 17th August I was sent to the front. At that time I had never been on patrol, or dug a trench, or seen a bomb. I had fired about ten rounds of live ammunition, and I scarcely knew one end of the bayonet from another. It is true that when I came out of hospital I had to go to a bayonet class. I had never been there before, and of course could not handle a bayonet properly. The instructor shouted, "Here, you there, you know nothing about bayonets, go back to the ranks." He was only a country policeman, and it did not seem to strike him that the less I knew the more he had to teach me. Once the lieutenant in his tour of inspection invited me to have a fencing match with him. I suppose he thought that as an educated man I would have learnt my drill, and that we should give the company a high-class exhibition of fencing

with the bayonet. Instead of which, I went for him like a wild cat and chased him round the quad. He came back, panting and tired, but quite good-natured, and he seemed rather to have enjoyed the experience.

I had never been taught any of those thousand and one things which are so necessary in the field. I could not roll my mantle, the N.C.O. had to do that for me, when I set out for the front. I had only once taken a rifle to pieces and cleaned it. All this means little to the layman, perhaps, but the soldier will read it with a grim smile. The fact was all the corporals said, "You'll not go out with us, you are too far behind. You must wait and get trained with the next lot."

I had tried to get transferred to a stretcher-bearer corps, but the sergeant-major said I must first finish my training, and that would take me three months yet. The same day he reported me as fit to go to the front. I protested to the captain that I was quite untrained, and he only answered, "You have been reported to me as fit to go to the front, and to the front you must go."

Much has been written about the severe discipline of the German Army, but I noticed very little of it. The feeling which ruled among the officers was, here are people who are about to face death and unheard-of privations for the Fatherland, we must treat them well while they are still at home. Punishments were rarely

given, except for gross disobedience. All sorts of things were winked at, which in times of peace would have brought us days of arrest. We had one fiery little lieutenant, who was continually losing his temper and inflicting on us extra drill, but we always ignored him, and so did the corporals, whose business it would have been to stay behind and superintend the drill. Some of the sergeants were abominably lazy. They would march us into the forest, select a likely place, tell us to lie down, and then wander about picking wild raspberries, first placing a sentry to see what the captain was doing. Suddenly a hoarse stage-whisper would be heard, "Herr Feldwebel, der Herr Hauptmann kommt!" (Sergeant, the Captain is coming), and the Feldwebel would roar in his best "command-voice," "Sprung, auf, marsch, marsch," and we would disappear into the depths of the forest. Once when we were idling like this by the side of a grassy lane, the General Commanding the Corps rode by. The silence became electric, we expected a great storm, and our expectations were heightened when he suddenly stopped his horse and ordered one of the men to rise and come to him. But the Great Man only pointed out that a strap was wrongly buckled, and then rode on.

Mr. Wells has made much in "Mr. Britling" of the stupid mistakes committed by the officers training English troops. Ours were no better.

Nearly all our sham fights went wrong. One night we had orders to attack a certain party, but not finding them, marched away home. The "enemy," meanwhile, had received no orders of any sort, so they remained on the "field of battle" for hours. Finally they took their courage in both their hands and marched home too. Such mistakes were always being committed. I do not say that our officers were especially stupid. It is only that blunders are inseparable from any form of human activity. Those made by English officers, which so much excite Mr. Wells, could be paralleled in any European country during the war. In one thing the English War Office did *not* blunder—that is, when they refused the offer of Mr. Wells's services as a soldier, until they had got the younger men trained.

The spirit of the men was excellent. They were keen to learn what it was necessary to know; but as our curriculum was so meagre that it could be mastered in a month, they did not see why they should bother too much about repeating things they could do already. One aspect of military life bored us intolerably. With the idea of enlivening our existence, games were introduced, such as blind-man's buff, hunt-the-slipper, and similar drawing-room fooleries. The men got so tired of these that they preferred to go to the front to do a man's work. I need hardly say that such games as football were never heard of.

We had, of course, all kinds of gymnastics, which would have been very good if carried out properly. But here discipline was at its slackest. One of the exercises, for example, was to climb a steep boarding fifteen feet high and then drop down on the other side as best one could. Those who were afraid were allowed to indulge their luxury of fear, no constraint being put on them whatever. A rage of disgust and contempt used to fill me at times when I saw how perfunctorily we were trained. The men were still intensely patriotic and confident of a quick and crushing victory. Drink and drabbing were looked down upon as unsoldierly by the majority of the men, but in this I think we were exceptional. From all that I could hear of other recruiting depôts, the war served with the majority of soldiers as an excuse for throwing restraint to the winds. The Government was on its guard, and in certain towns — for instance, Cologne — sentries were posted at the entrances to disreputable streets, and no soldier was allowed to pass. But in our depôt the soldiers were nearly all over thirty, and they were mostly married men. There was among them an exalted feeling of devotion to the Fatherland and of comradeship. When the call came to go to the front, many volunteered who could successfully have pleaded some physical ailment as an excuse for staying at home. I am proud to recall my association with these troops. We

were a real band of brothers. Rich and poor, high and low, educated and uneducated, all mingled together on terms of simple and unaffected equality. I did not find it so afterwards. At the front and in captivity social distinctions played a great part in embittering the relations between the "kameraden." It is true that in order to take your place in this society, you had to employ rather drastic methods. I remember once having a quarrel with the two soldiers who shared my locker with me. They were going off on a week's holiday, and insisted on taking the key with them. It is no good being a gentleman in cases like this. I simply called them every bad name I could lay my tongue to, and in the army you learn some bad names. After I had finished (which was not soon), they handed me the key with every appearance of respect, and whenever afterwards trouble appeared to be brewing for me, they used to say, "Here, you leave that man alone: he is our friend."

Their patriotism is the more to be wondered at, because there is no doubt they were made to endure much hardness. For the first ten days of our training we all had to live in barracks. I shall never forget this time; not even the squalor of a Russian prison has left such an impression on my mind. There were far more soldiers than beds, so some of us had to sleep on mattresses on the floor. At the beginning there were many

men with infectious diseases. The man who slept next to me was in an advanced state of tuberculosis, and he coughed all night. On the other side of this man was a soldier suffering from syphilis. We complained about his being put with us, and the doctor only shrugged his shoulders and answered that his was not a very infectious case. However, he was at last taken to hospital for treatment. We were never certain of getting the same bedding every night, and we were supposed to share washhand-basins. My first serious quarrel came when I insisted on washing myself under the tap. This was felt as a reflection on my partners in the washhand-basin.

The food was miserably insufficient for an active open-air life, and most of the men had to get supplies from home. Tea and coffee were dark slops scarcely to be distinguished from one another. On the other hand, the bread and sausage supplied were excellent—the best to be got in Germany at that time. We used to receive two loaves of bread a week, and when I took mine home the servant-girls all along the streets used to offer to buy them from me. We were paid about sixpence a day, but out of this we had to buy blacking, brushes, polishing materials, and several other odds and ends. We had two meals a day—dinner about twelve, and supper, a very light meal, at seven. Besides, coffee was supplied first thing in the morning. I am certain that no

soldier who confined himself to the rations supplied could have held out for a week. After the first ten days those who could afford it received permission to live out.

We used to get up every morning at five or six o'clock. Then there would be a march to the drill-ground, some four miles away, and we would do our exercises and be home by eleven or twelve. We never practised any attacks in massed formation, we were always sent forward in open lines. One of our officers had captured a Russian position by making the men crawl towards the enemy one at a time. He had taken the position with the loss of only eight wounded. We used to curse this officer from the bottom of our hearts. Crawling is terribly hard work, especially when you are in full kit, and still more so when you have to go through whatever mud, dirt, or puddles lie in your way. So many lives had been lost at the front by people being afraid to dirty their uniforms, that we were told to get ours very dirty. And to have a foul-mouthed peasant of a corporal shouting insults at you while you are wriggling in the mud, makes you feel a very worm.

From eleven to two we were free. From two to three we had "instruktion," that is to say, some portion of the Infantryman's Manual was explained to us. Four times out of five the subject was the duty of patrols. We were

supposed to know all this off by heart. Patrols were considered so important that everything else was subordinated to them in "instruktion." Generally the instructor was so tired of the subject that he used to amuse us by stories of the war, or of the pranks he used to play when he was a young recruit twenty years before. If everything else failed, the half-witted Alsatian was dragged out and tortured to make a German holiday. After "instruktion" came two hours more. These were employed either in the drawing-room games I have already mentioned, or in gymnastics, or in sighting-exercises; that is to say, for two hours on end we had to practise sighting our rifles in the three positions—standing, kneeling, lying. I have seen the way the Russian soldier was taught these things, and I should say the Russian was beyond comparison better trained than the German. The Russian targets were much better, much more like the real thing, and much more care was taken. Sometimes the route-march and the exercises took place at night, in which case we had a slack morning. All our marching was made to assimilate as near as possible to war conditions. Our knapsacks were filled with sand, and the weight of our equipment was about what we had to bear in the field (75 lbs.). Our great lack was in service rifles. Most of us had rifles captured from the Russians, and great big heavy things they are, too. For some time, indeed, I

had a rifle which bore the date 1820, and had probably been made in England. The strain of these exercises was severe, and I must confess that I was never so tired at the front as I was sometimes at home.

In one respect they had the advantage of probably any army in the world—in the songs they sang. Not only was the whole wealth of the German "Volkslied" open to us, but the special soldiers' songs, "O Strassburg," or "Ich hatt' ein' kamaraden," are all of good quality, while one ("Die drei Lilien") is superb. These songs provided me with unforgetable experiences. I have already mentioned how the Alsatians used to sing "O Strassburg." It seemed as if they could express themselves in no other way but by singing that. Although I had lived in Germany for many years, I never understood what a "Volkslied" was till I heard the soldiers sing. They were all peasants, and the impulse which created the ballad never seems to have died out in their class. They sang "Die drei Lilien," a ballad of high imaginative power, with the most intimate understanding. Indeed, every time they sang one of the old songs it seemed like a fresh creation. And all the while new songs are being composed, and the various joys and woes of a soldier's life are receiving an expression that is nearly always striking and effective. The stuff composed during the war itself, however, was

beginning to show the influence of the music-hall and was getting to be desperately vulgar.

I think we should all have been a very happy family if it had not been for the company sergeant-major. This personage is the greatest power in the company. He may be rude to the captain, but the captain dare not be rude to him; for if he is, things begin to go wrong in the company, headquarters get to know of it, and the reprimand falls, not on the company sergeant-major, but on the captain. Our man took a special pleasure in making us feel his power. His great sport was to get men sent to the front. He would make the lives of the other N.C.O.s such a hell to them that in wild desperation they would volunteer for active service long before their time. His favourite trick with the rank and file was to spoil their Sundays. The captain would sign our leave-tickets for Sunday, but as soon as his back was turned, the sergeant-major would take them all and throw them into the waste-paper basket. If the captain was away, he would fix a parade for 2.30 on Sunday afternoon. Punctually to time he would send some one to see if we were all there; but the great man himself would not appear till an hour or two later. Then we might be sent home, but far too late for the married men to collect their wives and children and get to their favourite coffee-garden in the suburbs. And all this was done with such an

insolent expression of mocking piety on his face, that I sometimes wondered that we did not club him with our rifles. If he ever went to the front at last, I am certain he was shot in the back by his own men before he had been there long.

My experiences allowed me to test the real estimation in which a soldier is held. On duty we all had to wear the same sort of uniform. When we were off duty we could wear a better sort, if we chose, made for us by our own tailor. Going home through the streets in my dirty service uniform taught me a good deal. All well-dressed people gave me a very wide berth. I got home, bathed and changed into my private uniform. It would be ungallant to say what a difference it made. But in time of war I would allow no flapper on the streets of a garrison town except in a strait waistcoat and a muzzle.

CHAPTER V

THE GERMAN ARMY IN THE FIELD

I INTEND in this chapter to relate what I heard about the course of the war from the soldiers themselves. I came to know much that was interesting, and I think that most of what I have to say will be new to English readers.

The German soldier was trained in time of peace to be good at marching and in attack. A resolute and aggressive spirit was cultivated by every means known to such students of the psychology of war as the Germans have always proved themselves to be. Defensive measures were almost completely ignored. The digging of trenches, for example, was practised only once or twice in a soldier's two years of training. Long forced marches under the conditions of actual warfare were frequent, and every year a number of men died through neglecting the precautions enjoined upon them as necessary in these marches. Even accuracy in shooting was made less of than endurance on the road. The soldiers were, moreover, deliberately made to go about their duties mechanically and to acquire the habit of doing things without asking the reason why. I remember that some German soldiers were much

amused when they heard that English officers gave themselves the trouble at manœuvres to explain to their men exactly what was taking place. Although this system of training was the rule, it was not universal in Germany. General von Haeseler was strongly opposed to it. Himself impatient of authority, he endeavoured to instil into his soldiers a spirit of responsibility and self-reliance. After the war broke out, the High Command saw how much better results had been achieved by French and English methods of developing the individual soldier, and Haeseler's ideals were adopted throughout Germany. Our instructors used rather to bore us by continually harping on "individual responsibility," and reminding us that the fate of the army depended on the private soldier's ability to stand alone and act for himself when no officer was present.

At the beginning of the war, then, Germany had an army of good marchers, overflowing with aggressive spirit, its great masses trained to work together with mechanical perfection. She threw the bulk of the army against France and used two small portions of it to conquer Belgium and to hold the Russians in check. For the first three weeks of the war Germany was only bluffing in Belgium and Russia. Less than forty thousand men sufficed to take Liége. The town was won not so much by the big artillery as by the marching power of the infantry. Tunnels and bridges

had been blown up and the line, wherever possible, destroyed. It was a race against time, in which the railway could not be used. The soldiers had to press forward by forced marches, and they described to me how, in order to lighten their steps, they threw away everything they could spare—knapsacks, bread bags, mantles, and trenching tools. Some even got rid of their tunics and marched in their shirt-sleeves. For miles and miles the roads were lined with the cast-off effects of the German soldiers. Many men could not keep up and fell fainting or dying by the wayside. Whatever opposition they encountered had to be crushed at once, regardless of cost. The slaughter was immense, one regiment being reduced to five hundred men by the time Liége was taken. In this case, at any rate, the training which the German soldier had received was justified by results. At the beginning of the war nothing seemed too wild and impossible for the German soldier to attempt. The tradition of audacity engendered in the army was always bringing in splendid prizes. At Namur, a lieutenant and four men bluffed into surrender the principal fort with its entire garrison.

The system had other aspects. I do not intend to discuss the terrorization of Belgium here, except to say that the worst allegations of the Allies are fully borne out by the tales the German soldiers relate to one another. Man after man

has told me how, when he was in Belgium, he used to fill Feldpostpakete with jewellery and send them home. Looting was frequent, unashamed, and not reproved by those in command. The tales of murder were just as numerous. Children knee-high were killed, women and girls driven into a house, which was then set on fire, and they were deliberately burned alive. The Germans had a peculiar liking for humiliating their victims before killing them. The condemned were nearly always made to dig their own graves. I heard one particularly touching story of a girl. She had shot a German officer; the reason was not stated, but it may be guessed. She was sentenced to be executed next morning. When she came out to her death, her face showed that she had spent the night in dreadful agony of soul. And yet the soldiers insulted her and clubbed her with their rifles before shooting her. Educated men used to feel shame at times. One such wrote home to his mother in a fit of remorse and described how, before shooting a French officer, he had made him put on his coat inside out. His mother was beside herself. "How could my son," she said, "do a thing like that?"

Another man told me about his experiences at Louvain. I give his words exactly. "We were sitting round the table in our room. Suddenly shots fell and some bullets whizzed past our heads and buried themselves in the wall opposite. The

lieutenant said, 'Put out the light, somebody.' This we did. 'Go out into the street, and wherever you see a Belgian or wherever you see a light in a house, shoot.'" The tale speaks for itself. The lieutenant had not the slightest evidence that the shots had come from the Belgians. This same soldier told me that from the first they had orders to give no quarter to the English.

I heard similar tales of rapine, arson, and murder in France. One army corps, I think it was the tenth, was especially famous for its record in these things. Villages were burned as a matter of course, without any military reason. Sheer savage lust of destruction was the motive and nothing else. The men of this corps were proud of what they had done and were regarded by the others with envy.

It was interesting to speak with those who had been at the Marne. They were unanimous in asserting that they had not been defeated, but had retired of their own free will. Some even spoke of having spontaneously retreated ninety kilometres in one day. The general opinion in the German Army was that the failure on the Marne was due to the Saxons. They could not march so well as the Prussians. The pace had been too much for them, so they had given up and left their comrades in the lurch. Others accounted for it by saying that just in the nick of time the Italians let the French know that they need not

guard the Italian frontier. Whereupon all the army corps in the South of France were suddenly thrown into the battle and their appearance turned the scale. But of Joffre as a factor that counted in the battle of the Marne there was never a word.

There were many complaints at the beginning of the war about the quality of the reserve officers. From not one but from several regiments I used to hear strange stories about the difficulties these men got their regiments into. On a certain occasion in the Vosges, the Germans had to retire, and their commander, an officer of the reserve, thought it a great thing to lead them into a kind of little pocket or basin in the forest. The French, however, knew these hills perfectly, and were well aware that that was the only place where troops could find shelter. They swept it with a storm of shell and left scarcely a man alive. In the early days the mortality among the subalterns was horrible. Later on they were not expected to lead their company to the attack, but to go behind the first line or "wave."

We used to have rare thrills in Bonn during the great fights. Officers were able to telephone straight from the field of battle to their families at home. You might sit in your study and exchange the time of the day with a friend in the trenches. It was not allowed officially, but it was done. Officers might telegraph if there was any important business to settle. So families in Bonn were

continually receiving this sort of telegram : " Buy 10,000 war stock," " By all means sell the house." This did not mean that the Frau Hauptmann was to engage in these transactions really ; it only meant that on the date the wire was dispatched, its sender was alive and well.

The Russian campaigns, like the Belgian, were won by bluff and good marching. In August, 1914, East Prussia was held by only a thin screen of troops, mostly Landsturm. But in order to deceive the enemy, trenches were dug and filled with dummy machine-guns and with scarecrows wearing the spiked helmets of the German infantry. In another district a division was employed for some time simply in marching between two points. In the daytime it marched from A to B, at night it entrained and was sent back to A, changed the numbers on its helmets and shoulder-straps and marched to B again. The Russians were thus led to believe that certain parts of the line were strongly held and that at other points a great concentration of troops was taking place. But for this they would have attempted a break-through and might really have reached Berlin. They were still more elaborately fooled at the winter battle of the Masurian Lakes. Here the Germans wanted to lure the Russians a second time into this dangerous territory. One would have thought it impossible, but the trap was set with masterly cunning. Reports appeared, not so

much in the German as in the neutral papers, that East Prussia was being evacuated and that the peasants were leaving their homesteads and villages and fleeing westwards in a wild panic. The Germans, it was hinted, were so occupied in France that they could not spare any troops for the Russian front. Meanwhile, whatever forces the Germans had, seemed to be concentrated opposite Warsaw. The Russians fell headlong into the trap and lost the flower of what was left of their old army. Neither battle of the Masurian Lakes could have been won except for the marching powers of the German infantry. While the enemy was held in front, it was necessary to march round with extreme swiftness and take him in the rear before he could begin to move his armies out of the trap. The soldiers who took part in this battle told me that the forced marches tried them beyond anything they had experienced in the war.

On the whole, the German training found its best justification in Russia. Here the conditions were exactly those for which it had been devised. The enemy was superior in numbers, and he was to be overawed by German dash, enterprise, and mobility. The principle in Russia was to go for the enemy wherever you found him, and to count neither his numbers nor your losses. The Russian *morale* was badly shaken. Our servant at Irkutsk, who had fought against the Germans, used to

wake us by shouting in his dreams, "The Germans are coming. Run! Run!" In time the Germans came to despise the Russians so much that they neglected the most obvious precautions. Our regiment once advanced to the attack without even reconnoitring the ground. When halfway across to the enemy's positions, they were suddenly held up by a sunken ditch. They had to go forward as best they could, and the leading company alone lost eighty killed.

But with all their dash the Germans would have been lost without their superiority in artillery. They had plenty of guns and plenty of ammunition, and could always batter the Russian trenches to pieces before attacking. The Russians, on the other hand, could only fire a limited number of shells per day, and were practically helpless against a bombardment. Most people will remember that some time in October or November, 1914, Hindenburg was surrounded by the Russians. He afterwards broke the ring, taking 12,000 prisoners with him. He owed his release solely to the heavy artillery, to which the Russians could not reply. One man who took part in the battle said to me, "We began to batter a sector of the Russian line at eight o'clock in the morning, and by the evening we were through."

The system of attack in massed formation, common to both the Germans and the Austrians, was most heartily disliked by the younger officers.

They used to protest against it, but in vain. On one occasion a regiment had received an order to attack, and its adjutant telephoned to head-quarters, "Attack impossible. Clear field of fire." He received the answer, "Doesn't matter. Go forward." He did so, and not a man came back, except the wounded. Sometimes the men themselves took matters into their own hands. We were once attacking a Russian village, and were met by a hurricane of shrapnel and bullets. Fifteen times the bugle sounded the charge, and fifteen times not a man stirred from where he lay. At last the artillery came up, and the Russians retired. The losses entailed by mass attacks were staggering. At the first battle of Ypres the Germans lost 120,000 men. As I have mentioned, when I was trained, the Germans were beginning to see reason, and were taught to go forward in open formation.

In the Austrian Army, while things were similar, discipline was looser and protest more easy. One officer, when ordered to a hopeless attack, refused point blank. "Very well, then," said the general, "if you don't attack, I shall turn the guns on you." The officer replied that if the general did that, he would order his men to right-about-turn and take the guns. The general gave in, and the officer received neither reprimand nor punishment.

The worst organized part of the German Army

was the Red Cross work. From all I could hear, it seems that the German Red Cross arrangements badly broke down in the first year of the war. At first I thought the complaints I heard were exaggerations, but the same story came from every part of the front. The stretcher-bearers were all said to be cowards, for ever lurking about in the rear, not daring to face a bullet. Besides they were selfish thieves, and they drank all the cognac themselves, which they were supposed to reserve for the wounded. "Why," the soldiers used to say, "even the Russians have organized their Red Cross better than we. Their stretcher-bearers do go forward with the soldiers in the front line." These complaints received some confirmation from the fact that a cavalry lieutenant of my acquaintance was transferred to the medical corps in order to organize the stretcher-bearers and see if he could not get them to face the music of the shells. Wherever I went at the front, the stretcher-bearers were treated with contempt by the other soldiers. What I say does not apply to the doctors, I never heard anything against them.

Again, at the beginning, the distribution of comforts left much to be desired. At one time on the French front you could buy a horse for two cigars. Later on the supply of tobacco was improved. Of religious work, or Y.M.C.A. work, there was comparatively little. The Germans had a brilliant idea for fighting venereal disease.

When a soldier fell ill, they sent his nearest relative a postcard to the effect that your son (husband, brother, as the case might be) was at "Hospital No. so-and-so, suffering from so-and-so." Shame kept many straight, when nothing else would have prevailed.

The accounts which the Germans gave of their enemies were interesting. They freely admitted that the French and English were better at flying than they. Of Russian aviators they thought nothing. On the other hand, every one had the greatest respect for the Russian artillery. It was the universal opinion that the Russian artillery-men were the smartest in the war. One German officer said to me, "If we had the Russian artillery we should be in Kieff by now." At a certain point on the Russian front we had half a battery—two guns—opposed to us. Yet so quickly did the Russians fire them off, boom, boom, boom, boom, that we thought they had a battery of four guns. And when the statements of prisoners placed it beyond a doubt that there were only two guns, our artillery were lost in wonder, and said that they themselves could not attempt such a thing. Of the Russian troops, the Cossack enjoyed a great reputation as a scout, but he was a poor fighter. The Austrians, who were in the disastrous retreat from Rava Ruska, told me wonderful tales of the Cossack cleverness in scouting. They would scarcely come within a

kilometre of the position, and yet they would have noticed exactly how it ran, and the Russian artillery would soon confirm the accuracy of their reconnoitring. The Germans had an unbounded admiration for the French soldiers. It was the fashion to pity the French for having such a splendid army, but such a poor Government.

But, of course, I was chiefly interested in hearing their views about the English troops. Before they met them, the Germans were full of contempt. English soldiers were hirelings, and certainly could not stand up to such troops as the Germans. A week's fighting sufficed to bring round their opinion to the exact opposite. Every English private, they said, fights like a sergeant and shoots like Buffalo Bill. In every branch of warfare they used to acknowledge the superiority of the Old Army. "Each single Englishman has to be dug out separately," they said. When Russians were captured, whole armies at a time, they used to get impatient. "What is the use of that," they said. "A thousand Russians are equal to ten Frenchmen and one Englishman." Our colonel, in a speech he made to the regiment in May, 1915, said, "In a few months, perhaps weeks, we shall have finished with the Russians, but," and here he turned to me, "I don't think we shall ever get finished with your country." I need scarcely say that I altogether dissociate myself from this estimate of Russian and French

troops. The battles which broke the Austrian front at Rava Ruska in 1914, and the victories of Brusiloff in 1916, were among the most brilliant operations in the war. The French soldier it would be impertinent for me to praise, except perhaps to say that this war has added fresh glory to an army which already had the most splendid traditions of any in Europe.

And finally comes the subject of the treatment of prisoners. The evidence as to Russian prisoners is conflicting. Cossacks received no quarter; they were always killed. I have heard many vile stories on this point; let one suffice. Once two hundred Cossacks were caught and told to line up with their faces to Russia. They were very glad, and thought they were going to be exchanged. Then, without a word being said, a machine-gun was turned on them from behind, and they were all shot. There are stories of great cruelty to other Russian prisoners, Hindenburg being especially prominent in this. When Russian prisoners were quarrelling in their barracks, he had the artillery turned on them, "to quiet them," as he said. For further stories of this kind I need only refer to the official papers of the Tsar's Government. On the other hand, I know that the Germans wanted to keep the Russian workmen in Germany after the war in order that they should take the place of the men Germany had lost on the battlefield. The Russian

labourers were said to learn quickly, and to do a good day's work when under German direction. Employers had the strictest orders to show every kindness to their Russian prisoners. I had a talk with an escaped prisoner of war, and he had nothing but good to say of his treatment in Germany. He praised the order, punctuality, and cleanliness of German life, and was determined to go back there after the war. It is possible that those prisoners who were willing to work were better treated than the others who stayed in the camps. A doctor who had lived in the prison camps, and who had been exchanged, gave the most terrible account of the treatment which the Russians received there. He said they were worst treated of all, because the Russian Government were so slow in taking reprisals; while the English were the best treated, because our Government were the promptest in reprisals. This referred to the year 1916, while Mr. Asquith was still Prime Minister.

The Germans used captivity for political purposes. They would throw French, Belgian, and English together, and then issue gleeful reports that these "Allies" were always fighting. From my experience of prison life I know exactly how this was done, because the Russians tried the same methods on us. You have only to pamper the French and to starve the English, and the mischief is done. A starving man is an irritable

man, and it takes a slight thing to make him an angry one.

With regard to the treatment of English prisoners I have no first-hand information. From the very beginning rumours were rife in Bonn that they were being badly used. These stories were told with great satisfaction, as if it were right to do so. The Germans themselves used to relate how English prisoners were incited by cruelty to revolt so as to have an excuse for shooting them. German soldiers used to tell me how naïve the English soldiers were. "When they were taken prisoners they wanted to shake hands and be friends. And they had just been killing our men, too. We always used to give them a good drubbing with the butt-end of our rifles. It is what they deserved for killing Germans." Let me add that at Cassel I met a German soldier who had been captured by the English and exchanged. He was full of gratitude for the kindness he had received. His captors gave him of their best before passing him on to the rear. When their transport reached Southampton station, a Red Cross nurse asked the officer if she might be allowed to give them some refreshment, and permission was readily granted. At Netley he had been much better off than at Cassel. There had been plenty to eat and drink, and, what was more, you could always help yourselves too.

The German is an inordinately vain man, and

he likes to impress people ("imponiren," he calls it). The English soldiers refused to be impressed. Their hard, indomitable temper filled the Germans with envy and despair, and the more brutal among them went to the utmost lengths in the endeavour to break the spirit of our men. I only once saw an English prisoner. It was at Cassel. He had been taken ill on a working-party, and was walking back to his camp. As he passed through our ranks, he bore himself with downcast eyes indeed, but with such pride and dignity that we all seemed to be mere recruits, and he the only true soldier present.

At the Front

Well, then, in the middle of August, 1915, we started for the Russian front. Our equipment even at that time was so bad that I am surprised Germany has held out so long. My tunic was made of shoddy; it tore easily and cockled up most pitifully in the rain. Leather was scarce in Germany and had to be quickly tanned, so what we received was inferior in quality and soon perished. Our helmets were of a variety of materials, some of aluminium, some of cardboard, but none of the good stout leather that was used before the war. The "pickelhaube," as the spiked helmet is called, is the only good point about the German uniform. It is delightfully cool and airy

in summer, and so flexible that it will fit any shape of head. The rest of the German uniform is an abomination of discomfort. The round fatigue-caps, besides giving one the appearance of a convict, are hot and oppressive, as no ventilation is possible in them at all. The tunic has every fault such a garment could have. It is made not only to button close, but to hook tight round the neck. When you are on the march and have the heavy knapsack pulling at the coat, and so making the throttle more painful still, the strain becomes almost unbearable. We were never allowed to unhook the collar on the march except when we had special orders to do so. There are only two pockets in front, and two others in the tail of the coat. This means that when you are in full uniform it is almost impossible to get at these pockets, and, as the soldier spends so much time lying about on the ground, the things you put there nearly always get broken. The army knee-boots are instruments of torture. They are roughly made, and are full of unevennesses of surface that rub painful sores, while the folds that form about the ankles are equally uncomfortable. They were stuffy in summer, heavy, and a serious impediment to quick movement. Low boots and puttees are infinitely preferable. Some of us wished to go to the front in low boots and leggings, but on account of the shortage of leather this was forbidden. Leggings could only be worn by officers. I had

a pair of knee-boots made for me of fine smooth leather, but even then, under ideal conditions, they were anything but comfortable. In addition, we had to carry in our knapsacks a pair of low boots, to act as "slippers"; that is to say, to be worn to ease our feet when we were off duty. It was found, when we arrived at the front, that most of us had thrown these boots away rather than be bothered with their extra weight. German soldiers thought that the English kit was very much better than theirs. They were amused because every English soldier was provided with a razor. Even officers told me that it was folly to shave at the front.

We received our clothes with many jokes, which may, or may not, be usual in other armies. "Now then, be careful there with my grave-clothes. What am I to be buried in, if you go spoiling them already?" Witticisms of this sort were frequent. The German soldier is not the least squeamish about speaking of death. His songs are full of it. And the little books of devotion issued by his Government are written with great skill in order to make him feel that death is something pleasant and light, the entrance to a life of toilless ease. I never read these books without feeling an inclination to die then and there.

We marched off to the station in traditional German style, flowers in our rifles, flowers in our helmets, flowers in every nook and cranny of our uniform that would take a flower. The officers

used to protest against this, saying that it made us look like prize oxen at the fair. Considering what the fate of prize oxen is, the simile was not altogether inapt. In any case, the fashion suited the peasant taste. Before we left, a short religious service was held on the parade-ground. The chaplain, who had already been awarded the Iron Cross, had gained my respect a few weeks before by a sermon he had preached to order on the special temptations of a soldier's life. It was the only sermon of the kind that I have heard, which neither offended his hearers' feelings nor in any other way violated the rules of good taste. But he was yet to show what he could do. At the end of the service he said, with indescribable unction, "Now let us all join in saying the Lord's Prayer, and after that in singing, 'Deutschland, Deutschland über alles!'"

There was a great parade of secrecy about our destination. We were not supposed to know where we were going, and from the time we were selected for service we were not allowed to telegraph. As a matter of fact, the officials responsible revealed all that they ought to have kept secret, and we knew exactly for what part of the huge Russian front we were bound and all the details of our journey. And through us the whole of Cassel knew too.

Our life for the next three or four weeks till we reached our regiment was simply a jolly picnic.

We were three hundred strong, under the command of two sergeants, genial fellows, who had never been to the front and who were anything but soldiers. Our train journey took us through Central Germany to Breslau, and thence *viâ* Cracow to a station beyond Rava Ruska, the name of which I have forgotten. In High Germany we were greeted with enthusiasm at every station, in German Poland no one took any notice of us, in Austrian Poland our reception was directly hostile. The Austrians treated us like "matter in the wrong place." We reached Cracow at ten at night, and were to have had supper there. Nothing had been got ready for as and no one knew anything about us. We stood waiting in the rain for two hours, and then we had to pass in single file before a small window and each receive his basin of soup. At Kattowitz, the last German station, our transport, now swelled to a thousand men, had been fed in less than half an hour. The Austrians were sulky at having to trouble about us and took no pains to conceal their feelings, and the Germans were wild with rage at the way they were treated.

This is, perhaps, the best place to speak of the relations between the Germans and the Austrians. There have been many discussions in the press as to whom the Germans hate most, whether it is the English or the Americans. I have no doubt at all that the German soldier hates the Austrian most,

They felt themselves betrayed from the beginning of the war. When the Russians broke through at Rava Ruska, Hindenburg sent down an officer to find out what was wrong. He returned with the report: "Da ist eine bodenlose Schweinerei, wir werden alles selbst machen müssen" ("Things are in no end of a mess; we shall have to do everything ourselves"). Hindenburg used to allow himself witticisms at the expense of his Allies. Once he remarked, "I won't have anything said against my Austrians. They serve to occupy the enemy till the military come up." Stories were current of Prussian officers serving on the Austrian staff, who had discovered Austrian generals in the very act of telephoning to the enemy and had shot them dead on the spot. Meanwhile the Germans, by their behaviour, let the Austrians know that they remembered all these things. It was most amusing to watch Austrians attempting to fraternize with Germans. The Austrian, with his gay and careless elegance of manner, would approach the German and try to get into conversation with him. Most probably he would begin by asking where the other came from. The German would draw himself up stiff and straight till he looked as if he had swallowed the poker, and would put on an air as if he concentrated in his own person all the victorious majesty of his army. Then, in the sharp staccato dear to the Prussian drill-sergeant, he would answer, "Ich bin aus

Cassel, Regierungsbezirk Cassel" (as who should say, "I am from Nottingham, Nottinghamshire"). The Austrian, recognizing the case as hopeless, would give him up with an amused glance and turn to something else. Meanwhile the German, having just wit enough to see that he was being laughed at but far too stupid to see what there was ridiculous about him, would go away, heaping fresh curses on the head of "Bruder Oesterreich" (Brother Austria).

The Austrian, if possible, hated the German just as bitterly. While we were on the march, we met an Austrian army corps going in the opposite direction. The officers deliberately rode their horses at us in order to edge us into the muddy parts of the road. It is significant that although we were some hours in contact with this army corps, we never exchanged a single greeting or taunt, such as is usual among soldiers meeting on the march. While it is true that there was much that was rotten in the Austrian Army, it must never be forgotten that some regiments fought magnificently, especially the Tyrolese. A common soldier of the Tyrol Rifles was wounded and taken prisoner by the Russians. As he lay in hospital, a general, making his rounds, came to his bed. On hearing who he was, the Russian general took off his helmet and saluted the Austrian private in honour of the splendid courage displayed by his regiment in the field.

The Austrians were in an unfortunate position, because their relations with the Hungarians were just as strained as with the Germans. The Hungarians, on the other hand, were extremely friendly with the Germans. They were good fighters in hand-to-hand fighting, indeed the most formidable troops in the armies of the Central Powers. They had never failed the Germans, who, in consequence, always treated them with especial respect. Prince Eitel Friedrich had at one time been studying Hungarian with a view, it was said, of becoming King of Hungary. The Austrians watched all these things with bitter jealousy and suspicion. They would affect to despise the Hungarian, and would tell you that he was not a European yet at all, and that Asia began at Buda-Pesth. The Hungarians never concealed their contempt of the Austrians. They did not value the union with Austria; all they wanted was an alliance with Germany. Three years ago Hungarian officers were openly talking of the coming revolution that was to drive the Hapsburgs out, make Hungary free, and to draw Hungary and Germany closer together.

On our journey we had plenty of opportunity to study Austrian feeling. The train took us through Galicia, and we passed the famous battlefields (now, alas! forgotten) of 1914–15, Jaroslav, the San, Rava Ruska, and so on. The large towns seemed to be in fairly good preservation,

but in the country there was nothing but ruin and desolation. The fields were empty, and what peasants we saw scowled at us with hate. The hostility of the people we were supposed to be fighting for made a deeper impression upon us than the distress caused by the war.

We detrained and began a march in pursuit of our regiment, which lasted three weeks. The Russians were in retreat, the regiment pushed forward, and we had to follow after as best we could. Our way took us to Cholm, across the Bug at Wlodawa, then to Kobrin, and thence southwards among the marshes, where we struck the regiment at last. It was a jolly time. We had perfect weather, sunshine all day, but the air was bracing and fresh; it seemed impossible to get tired in that climate. We marched from eight to twelve, halted for the day, cooked our meals, bathed or walked about, and went to bed at nine. It reminded me very much of the continually recurring sentence in Xenophon: "We marched X parasangs and had breakfast." We tried to do twenty kilometres (about fourteen miles) a day, and every four or five days we had one day's complete rest. Wherever possible, we put up for the night at the country houses of the Polish nobles, because they had orchards that gave us apples and kitchen gardens that gave us potatoes. The houses were completely gutted, not a stick of furniture was left, and they were often defiled in the most

disgusting manner. When we had no meat, we took from the peasants what we wanted. We paid by giving them a sham "bon," with the reverse (eagle) side of a ten-pfennig piece rubbed in. They saw the eagle and thought it something wonderful, although it was quite valueless. Sometimes a cow would be shot and its flesh immediately cut up, and, still warm and trembling, be distributed among us to make soup of. All our peasants and labourers could cook, and they despised the educated men because they did not know what to do with the meat they received. I was three hours frying my first steak; nothing I could think of made any impression on it, and it remained obstinately leathery. The next time a "Kamerad" showed me how to beat it tender with the blade of my bayonet, and, lo! the steak was fried in ten minutes.

We had an interesting three days' stay at Cholm. There was a cholera camp here, at which it was said seventeen German soldiers died a day. The whole country from the San to the Bug was devastated with cholera. Cholm also had a dysentery hospital where the patients were so numerous that they had to lie about on the ground for days before they could be attended to. German order ruled in the town. Notices were posted up that only certain wells could be used, and bakers were especially warned about the water they took for baking. The attitude of the

population was instructive. The Russians hated us, the Poles were afraid of us, the Jews received us with open arms. The German Government had already begun an extensive propaganda. Local newspapers had been founded which should bring the people round to Germany's side. They certainly made some impression on the Jews, if on no one else. At Cholm the only good restaurant was strictly reserved for the use of officers. For us there remained a few dirty Jewish eating-houses. Y.M.C.A. huts or clubs would have been very welcome because we had nothing to do all day, and time hung very heavy on our hands. I consider it one of the greatest successes in the war that this side of a soldier's life was so well looked after by the English and the French.

When we were not in the towns, we used to spend the time very happily. All the golden afternoons we used to bathe in the rivers or lakes and then run up and down in the bright sunshine to get dry. At times the whole village—men, women, girls, and children—would turn out to watch us. We were more puzzled than embarrassed at these attentions. There was something about them we could not account for. At last we heard that their popes had told them that every German soldier was a veritable devil with horns, hoofs, and tail complete, and they had come out to see with their own eyes whether it was so or not.

Almost every day we saw the site of some skirmish, and near by would be a little group of graves with wooden crosses bearing the names of the fallen. We would thus keep the track of our regiment, and often would find the names of those we knew among the dead. At last we reached the front. In the three weeks' march, of three hundred who left Cassel, one hundred had already dropped out through sickness. All the Jews and all the Alsatians, with one exception, had drunk themselves into dysentery. If in a cholera country you go on drinking well water unboiled, you are sure to get dysentery sooner or later. When we arrived at the headquarters of the regiment, we had to undergo three formal receptions. The major commanding the regiment, the captain commanding the battalion, the lieutenant commanding the company, each delivered a speech, but the only thing that did us any good was the quiet little heart-to-heart talk the company sergeant-major had with us that evening before going to bed. Apparently the last set of recruits had proved unsatisfactory. They had even taken to stealing things out of their comrades' knapsacks. The law in our company was that you might take anything that was not in a knapsack. It was the man's own fault, if he lost it, for leaving it lying about. On the other hand, to steal out of a knapsack was the unpardonable sin and was severely punished. I do not know anything about the

code of morals in other armies, but I do know this, the German working man will pilfer whenever he can, and no feeling of shame or good comradeship will restrain him. And the Socialism with which he becomes indoctrinated in the army makes it appear almost a virtue to steal from the rich.

We belonged to a flying division, the function of which was to pop in wherever things were going badly. Our march was steadily southward and we were destined, I believe, for Serbia. Usually we fought all day and marched all night and slept when we could. We were a crack regiment and the utmost was expected of us. There was scarcely any one in the company who had started out with the regiment in 1914; half of us were raw recruits, and even then we did not number more than one hundred and twenty. Much is said about the sternness of German discipline, but there was little of it to be seen here. There was rather a spirit of good understanding between officers and men. The officers knew that they could rely on their men, and the men trusted their officers. The weak spot was the young lieutenant commanding the company. He was nervous, excitable, and wild in his plans, but it was acknowledged that he looked after us very well and took great pains to see that we were comfortable. The strong point was the company sergeant-major, who was said on countless occasions to have

rescued the company out of awkward positions into which the impetuousness of the lieutenant had led us. But perhaps that is said in all regiments. In any case the sergeant-major gave himself no trouble to conceal his opinion of the lieutenant. I remember when we were in a forest one dark night, the lieutenant ordered patrols to be sent out in order to get into touch with another battalion. Now, the forest was so dense that we had lost ourselves in it by day; it was perfect folly to dream of finding anybody in it at night. The sergeant-major told us of the lieutenant's order with a flick of contempt in his voice, adding that he was not going to send any of us out on that wildgoose-chase. It seemed to me that he nursed a grievance, because no commission had been given him. He was the oldest officer in the regiment, and as competent and clear-headed as any one there, but he had not passed the requisite examination at school. In any case, to be ordered about by a mere chit of a boy went very much against the grain. Cases of this sort may explain the dramatic suddenness of the revolution in the German Army. If the higher N.C.O.s become infected by the prevailing discontents, then farewell discipline and order.

I have often been asked if I witnessed any atrocities at the front. I saw nothing to speak of, but then I was there only a very short time. Whatever stores of food the inhabitants had were

ruthlessly plundered. But there again a soldier is allowed by the traditions of war to take whatever he wants to eat wherever he finds it—in a conquered country, at any rate. The plundering was unnecessary in the majority of cases, we were well enough fed, and the men simply took because it was there to take. Often it meant black ingratitude. A peasant and his wife would receive us kindly in their house, make a fire for us, and help us to cook. Then some one would begin to search the house, and whatever could be carried off, would be taken. One incident I shall never forget. We had arrived at a village which was still full of poultry. The men dispersed, taking what they could. In one farmyard I saw a girl, just in time, whip the two fattest hens under her shawl. The men came up, demanding to know where the poultry was. She stood there, pressing the hidden birds to her bosom, mocking defiance in her eyes, the picture of saucy courage. Then, with a gesture of contempt, she indicated some geese in the distance. The men, deeply grateful to her, went off in pursuit. A tame goose-chase does not sound very exciting, but is rather good sport. You make a ring round the bird, and just when you think you have got it, it rises in the air and escapes you. The scene was suggestive —the clumsy soldiers in their heavy boots perseveringly stalking a goose, that every time eluded them with ease—surely an apt emblem of

much in German life—and the girl, their muse and inspirer, watching them with a contempt that deepened till she seemed Disdain personified.

I did not see any instances of violation of the rules of war in battle. The Austrians were often to blame for the use of dum-dum bullets. They had soft-nosed tracer bullets for finding the range, but the common soldiers, as might have been expected, did not restrict themselves to using them for this purpose only. Once they shot away whole cases full of this ammunition. The Russians captured a battalion of Austrian infantry next day, shot them all except one, and sent him back to say what they had done and why.

The thing which angered me most was the brutal treatment of prisoners. Those kept just behind the front were always hungry and in rags, and yet they were made to work at tasks of great severity. Thus I have seen Russian prisoners hauling huge trees along the road. We invariably greeted them with insult and jeers. One of the favourite taunts to hurl at them was, "Nikolaus entlaust" ("Nicholas has got rid of his lice"). The common soldier had not a trace of chivalry or generous feeling in him. The only one to protest against this sort of thing was the Alsatian, who tried in vain to bring his comrades round to a humaner point of view.

I have already mentioned that the relations between officers and men were good. In this

connection it is as well to say that those stories one sometimes reads of German officers flogging their men are quite impossible. It is unthinkable that a German officer should hit a soldier. I have never heard of its being done, and redress is so quick and certain, that even if it had occurred by mischance in any regiment, it could never have become a regular practice. Brutality, however, had plenty of opportunities to manifest itself. I heard a story of two old school friends who had a quarrel in the trenches. One was a private, the other a corporal. Unfortunately the private forgot himself and used bad language to his friend the corporal. The latter immediately reports the affair, the private is court-martialled and sentenced to twelve years' imprisonment. Before he is sent away, the battalion is drawn up on parade, the major in command lectures them on the heinousness of the crime, spits at the criminal, and then, turning his back on the men, says, "I now leave you to do what you like with him." They take the hint and give him a good drubbing with the butt-ends of their rifles. I do not think that such a thing could have happened in our regiment, but there was nothing in the regulations of the army to prevent it.

Although the relations between officers and men were good, those between the various social classes among the common soldiers were very bad. In England the war seems to have drawn the

classes together, they have come to understand and respect one another. In the German Army exactly the opposite has happened. Theoretically from the moment war was declared, all classes were equal in the army. Promotion was to be by merit alone. In practice, the educated men were marked out from the beginning for promotion, if only they showed any promise at all, and they were not only more quickly promoted, they could rise higher, they could receive a commission. The uneducated, no matter what his abilities, never got beyond a sergeant. On this account the "lower" classes bore the "upper" classes a grudge, and did what they could to make their life miserable. The educated men, on the other hand, were disgusted by the continual thieving of the working-man, his brutality, and his utter want of comradeship. I know of no educated man in the German Army whose thinking had not taken on an anti-Socialist and pro-Conservative tendency as the result of his experiences in the war. To know the German labourer was not to respect him. My experiences with the working-man were uniformly wretched until almost the last, when I made the acquaintance of some artisans at Irkutsk. These men one could respect, and it was possible to form such friendships with them as we read of in the English Army. But then they belonged to the aristocracy of labour, some of them had thriving businesses of their own, and I do not think they

regarded themselves as ordinary labourers. Be that as it may, from all that I could hear and see, the war has greatly intensified the bitterness of class feeling in Germany, inasmuch as it has taught the different classes of society in the army to hate and distrust one another.

For the rest, our life was like that of soldiers in the classic wars of older times. There was nothing in it of the terrors of modern battle which made the Western Front so dreadful. We marched and fought, pursuing an enemy that retreated further and further and avoided a decisive battle. It was warfare as Marlborough or Napoleon knew it. The strategy was simple, and the means of destruction were comparatively simple—the bayonet, the rifle, the field-gun. Our men affected to despise the Russians, but I noticed that the longer they had been at the front, the more they thought of the enemy. The Russians neither harried nor pressed us, they simply gave way. Provided only that they held Hindenburg in the north round Riga, they were content to let us take as much of the barren marshland of Central Russia as we chose. This continual expectation of a battle that never came strained our nerves more than actual fighting did. I remember once advancing on a Russian village, which was situated on the top of a hill. We toiled upwards in that tense and sultry mood which always precedes action, each of us too occupied with his own

thoughts to speak. Further and further we trudged, and after some time the sergeant behind me began to point out where he thought the Russian artillery must be posted. On we went, every moment expecting the hail of shrapnel to begin. Finally the suspense became unbearable and the sergeant quite lost his temper. "Why to —— don't those —— Russians begin shooting at us?" he screamed. "They ought to have begun long ago." The ungrateful man soon knew, for in a few minutes we came upon the Russian trenches quite deserted. They were beautifully dug, and would have cost us half our strength to storm; and yet, in order to keep the line intact, the Russians had preferred to retreat.

Naturally such experiences had left their mark on the older men. The continual refrain of their talk was, "We should not mind if we knew that in the next action we were going to stop a bullet. It is the uncertainty that is so awful." At home our corporal had told us that if we were wounded, we should be ready to jump a yard in the air with joy. And to get a "heimatschuss"—a wound serious enough to send you home—was the great desire of most soldiers. After the first action we had been in, we all crowded round the wounded, cheering and congratulating them on their good luck. I do not wish to be misunderstood. None of our men were slackers or malingerers at the front—except our only Jew.

When a dangerous job was to be done, there were always plenty of volunteers. But the men hated their work, and they had an especial contempt for the man who could fall so low as to be a soldier by profession.

There were, of course, cases in this life, moments of exquisite beauty, and other times when laughter ruled. There was the spectacle of Russian villages burning by night—enormous masses of smokeless flame leaping to the sky, vivid colour in its intensest and purest form. (Lest any one should think that I was a Nero to gloat over such sights, let me repeat that nothing of value was destroyed in these villages.) Then there were the days and nights we spent in the forest. In those thickets our eyes did not help us much ; all we could do was to listen. Our ears grew so subtle that we could distinguish and interpret all the sounds of the forest, and we lived so close to nature that we seemed to become a part of it. So quiet were we that the wild deer used to trip along our line without taking any notice of us. Other German soldiers were not so fortunate in their encounters with the wild beasts of the forests. I have known men so upset by the stillness of the woods that the mere rustling of animals in the undergrowth has made them throw down their arms and take to their heels. A Prussian major was once leading his battalion to the attack, when a wild boar rushed out from

his hiding-place and, scuttling between the major's legs, floored him! The major is said to have cried out, "The enemy is upon us!" and run for his life. But I do not believe that so easily of a Prussian major.

Our chief care was to get enough sleep. We marched by night, in order, I suppose, that the enemies' spies should not know where we went. The Russians were kept well informed of our movements. This was not wonderful when we consider that wherever we marched we met refugees returning to their homes. We even advanced to battle once through a crowd of these people. Among them there must certainly have been a large number of spies. But by marching at night, when all Russians had to be indoors, we were able suddenly to reinforce threatened positions and give the enemy some disagreeable surprises. The first thing we did after digging ourselves in, was to go to sleep. One of my earliest lessons in the art of war was when I was posted as sentry—in my simplicity I thought against the Russians—while the rest went to sleep. Suddenly the company sergeant-major appeared in our midst and wanted to know why the others were all snoring. Afterwards my corporal took me aside and explained to me that the company sergeant-major was a far more dangerous man than the Russians, and that I had been posted to prevent surprise from him. That afternoon, how-

ever, I was able to retrieve my reputation. We advanced a little, dug ourselves in again, and all went off to sleep leaving me as sentry, and I was just able to wake them in time to receive the lieutenant commanding the company. At last, one night the Russians made a surprise attack and caught us in our sleep. There are all sorts of questions connected with this surprise I should like answered. Theoretically our arrangements made such things impossible. We had patrols all night long in No Man's Land, we had outposts half a mile from billets, and we had patrols whose only business was to go from sentry to sentry and collect news. Finally, there was a sentry posted at the billets who ought to have given the alarm if he heard firing going on. The old regiment which marched out in August, 1914, would not have allowed itself to be caught napping so badly. It could only have happened to a regiment of recruits. By the last thing I saw of the sergeant-major, it seemed he had lost his head for once. Instead of organizing the defence, he was screaming with fury at the sentry for letting the Russians in upon us, all the while busily kicking him fore and aft.

For myself, I plunged in the direction of the firing, when suddenly the earth to my left seemed to become alive with flame. To my excited senses it appeared that a whole regiment was firing at point-blank range at me alone. We were in a

country of low sand-dunes; I tried to run, but the sand hindered my steps, and the volleys of fire still pursued me. Russian rifles fire much too high, so the bullets went over my head, but I had no time to think of that. I plumped down and shammed dead. The firing stopped at once. Then I made a sudden start, got a little way, and then managed to get over the crest of the dune into the valley below. In a minute or two the same thing had to be repeated all over again. The Russians seemed to be everywhere. I can well believe the huntsman who say the fox enjoys being hunted. I really did enjoy this crowded hour of glorious life. All my faculties were stretched with the one endeavour to escape. Of consequences to myself I did not think. That part of me that could think was simply the spectator at a particularly thrilling drama. At last I met a corporal who gave me instructions to proceed in a certain direction. I went as he instructed me, and I saw in the distance dim shadowy figures moving. I hailed them, they stopped, I approached, and found myself before a party of Russian soldiers. They grinned and made me welcome. A few minutes later a burst of loud cheering announced that the Russians had taken our position by storm.

CHAPTER VI

IN CAPTIVITY

I THINK it of the greatest importance to set down exactly how the Russians treated their prisoners, because the German reports tell of abominable cruelties, and the Russian denials are often taken as a matter of course and are not believed. It is useless to ignore the fact that the prisoners of war suffered much, and indeed we had to undergo horrors which even now it appals me to remember. But of deliberate or methodical cruelty we encountered little, and when we did come across it, we usually put it down to the character of the persons in command, and not to any system enjoined upon them from above. The few exceptions will be carefully noted in their proper places. The Russian is a careless, happy-go-lucky fellow. A temperament like his makes a man a kind warder, but at the same time his lack of organizing power inflicts hardships which a little foresight could easily prevent. In Russia they told us that we should be ordered two pounds of meat a day in Siberia, and should only receive half a pound. The other pound and a half disappeared through "squeeze" or "graft." That fact alone characterizes the Russian treatment of prisoners

better than any words of mine can—its good intentions spoiled by official incapacity.

I have mentioned that the Russian soldiers grinned when I suddenly ran into their midst that night. This gave me my first insight into their nature. According to what we had been told in the regiment, the Russian was a blood-thirsty savage who would cut the throat of any one who fell into his hands, and who never showed mercy. I have collected the experiences of prisoners from every one of the various fronts, and I have found no instance of cruelty on the part of the common soldier. The general opinion of the Russian is reflected in the judgment of an Austrian officer I knew. "The Russian soldier is the kindest and warmest-hearted man in the world, so long as he is not drunk, but then he is below the beast." I know some will say, "But how about the excesses of the Revolution, then?" To begin with, these excesses are not organized by Russians, but by Jews, and they are carried out by Letts and soldiers of the Central Powers in Russian uniform. And since the Bolsheviks came into power alcohol has been easy to obtain, and a drunken soldier has become as common a sight as it was rare in the last years of the Czar.

There were ugly stories about the Cossacks. These were seldom related to me by eye-witnesses, but only repeated at third or fourth hand. One of the stories is not without its humorous side.

A little Austrian Jew, the only decent one I met in captivity, was wounded and left on the field of battle. The Russians bound up his wounds, but as the struggle raged to and fro they could not remove him, and he lay there for days. From time to time Cossacks would ride by and prod him with their lances, and shout the question, "Germanski?" He answered, "No; Austrian." If he had said he was a German they would have killed him on the spot; but if they had known that he was a Jew they would have hacked him into a thousand pieces. In any case the cruelty of the Germans towards the Cossacks justified, if such things can be justified, the treatment that the Cossacks occasionally meted out to the Germans.

Providence having led me to these fellows, I was not inclined to quarrel with its decrees. I had done all that was required of me, and I did not conceive it my duty to engage in single combat with half a dozen Russian soldiers on behalf of a cause I detested. From the first the soldiers were decently behaved, almost respectful, and they left me in possession of all my property. I was even allowed to keep my knife; but presently a man came along, who, from the expert way he searched me, must have been either a policeman or a thief by profession, and he took everything of value he could find. Fortunately my breast-purse, containing £3, escaped his notice. There

was an amusing moment when one of my captors drank off the contents of my water-bottle, hoping to find in it tea or something stronger. When it proved to be coffee he spat it out in great disgust, and turned on me, shouting "Germanski! Lutheranski!" The inference was obvious, that only a pig of a Lutheran would drink such a mess as coffee. I dared not laugh out, but in my heart I thanked him for the incident. The Russian soldiers were interested in our religion. They used the word "Lutheranski" as a term of contempt, while they treated the Catholics with a certain respect.

Finally, after an anxious quarter of an hour, spent in dodging German bullets on the one hand, and, on the other, Russian officers who wanted my captors to return to the fight, I was introduced to the General. And at once I was able to remark the awe which the German name had inspired. He drew himself up and received my salute with a ridiculously vain air. Two days later, at Divisional Headquarters the same feeling was noticeable. Here, too, the General was flattered at being saluted by a German soldier. It nurtured the pride of race in the Germans, and gave them an immense feeling of superiority even in captivity.

For some time I was kept here on the edge of a forest, and had leisure to observe a General directing a battle. Messengers came hot-foot

from all directions, and were dismissed as quickly as they came; at times the General would bellow his orders into the telephone, and his deep voice would boom through the forest. It was all so curious, because of the actual fighting we saw and heard nothing. It was like blindfold chess. Most interesting of all was a device for transporting the wounded—a litter was bound to two horses ridden by Cossacks, and slung so as to hang from the head of the fore horse and the hindquarters of the rear one. It was very low, and nothing could have been smoother or freer from jolting. Our wounded men were put into springless carts, and they suffered unspeakable agonies from being bumped about on the rutty, uneven roads. Here, at any rate, we could have learned something from the Russians.

The next day the prisoners were gathered together, and we fell into the hands of the Cossacks. They began by making gestures as if they intended to cut our throats, and by pointing to the trees as if they were going to hang us. One of us burst into tears; but a Jew who could speak German explained that they were only having a joke with us. They were so bitter at the "dirty lies" the Germans spread about their cruelty that they thought a little fun of this sort allowable. A Russian, they added, never hits a man when he is down. Some hours afterwards they asked the man why he had cried, and he

showed himself no fool. He said it was because he was so hungry. The Cossacks immediately busied themselves about us, brought us water to wash with, made us tea, gave us so much supper that we could not have eaten any more, rolled us cigarettes, and—greatest compliment of all—sometimes took the half-smoked cigarette out of their own mouths and put it into ours. Late at night we set off again, and the Cossacks, as they sat their horses, with their black caps and their long black mantles flowing in the moonlight, made a figure of romance that seemed to carry us out of Europe into Asia. It took me straight back to the Middle Ages, and I thought I saw the soldiers of Saladin or Genghis Khan again. In their wild, careless ways they were unlike any troops I had ever known. As horsemen they were far superior to the German or Austrian cavalry. I have seen them race their horses at full speed in and out among the trees of the forest—a manœuvre which requires a touch as delicate as it is certain, because even a slight error would lead to their brains being dashed out. And I know of no other cavalry capable of doing it.

We arrived at Divisional Headquarters the following day, and were lodged in the loft of a warehouse. The ground floor was a guard room, the second floor was a place of detention for Russian soldiers, and our loft was shared by spies—mostly Jews. We were very indignant

at having them thrust upon us, because we had done nothing disgraceful. They were soon removed—out of consideration for their feelings, not for ours. The building had been erected to stock parquet-flooring, and we used to take out the beautiful examples of Russian peasant-work, hack them to pieces, and make our fires with them. The authorities did not trouble about this destruction of valuable property at all.

We were a mixed lot, Austrians and Germans. The leader of the Austrians was a Serbian sergeant, who had been captured on patrol. His twin brother had been shot beside him, and his last act in the field had been to bury him and erect a cross over his head. One day we found him touched to tears, and asked what the matter was. It turned out that the Russian General of the Division could speak Serbian and had actually been at this man's home. The Russians were obviously trying to cajole the Austrian Slavs round to their side. The other Austrians were from the Polish Legion. They were said to be deserters, and they treated the Germans with haughty contempt. All our communications with the Russians took place through the Austrians, as only they could speak a Slav language. They made use of this to get all they wanted for themselves and to cheat us in whatever way they could. It was so throughout the captivity wherever I went. The Germans had a saying, "We are

twice in captivity, first to the Russians, secondly to the Austrians." The hatred of the Austrians they had brought with them from the front was only intensified in captivity, and it will bear bitter fruit in time to come.

The Germans were mostly peasants from East Prussia and Silesia. Some of them were very dirty, and one man did not wash all the while we were there. Three were suffering from vile skin diseases. This would have been bad enough; if we had only been obliged to see it every day. But our soup was brought to us in a huge bowl, and we were all supposed to eat out of it with our spoons. After some days we managed to make arrangements by which the soup was portioned out to each one separately. The distribution always led to fierce quarrels, the Germans accusing the Austrians of taking too much, and *vice versâ*.

The Russians were alive to our differences and did their best to aggravate them. We were very badly fed, and once for five days had nothing to eat but mouldy breadcrumbs, which in other times I should have been ashamed to throw to the mice. We began to supplement our diet by fetching potatoes, but this was forbidden to the Germans by the lieutenant in charge of us. He had dark mild eyes which shone with a peculiar radiance at times, when a smile lit up his face, and you were inclined to think him the kindest of men. But that smile only came when he had thought

out some torture for the "Germanski." The pangs of hunger grew so fierce that I could do nothing but try to sleep all day. Then the lieutenant would suddenly appear and order us out to do menial work—sweep the house or the garden-paths or clear up horse-dung with our hands. This last we refused to do, and our guards, kinder than their superiors, never insisted. The first time I went out, I was so giddy that I could scarcely stand. The Austrians, who were well fed and had nothing to do, rather enjoyed the spectacle of our humiliation.

The kindness of the Russian soldiers helped us through. I had made especial friends with a certain set by paying them extravagant prices for a mug, a towel, and a cake of soap. They always gave me something when they saw me—bread, or meat, or soup, or sugar. One man offered me a cigarette once, but I pointed to my heart and refused. He was not to be baulked of his kindness, however. He searched his pockets and took out a handful of sugar and gave it me, saying, "Well, then, Daddy" (I was so called on account of my big beard) "take that." Sugar was a very important article of diet, because it served to make the moist Russian bread palatable.

Fairness compels me to say that the Germans probably brought their misfortunes on themselves. In conversation one of them had used the phrase, "Schweinspolak," *i.e.* a pig of Pole, a somewhat

frequent term of abuse in Germany. Our guards were Poles, and when they called his attention to what he had said, he did not even attempt an apology, but only tried to laugh it off. Under the circumstances the action of the Russians is easy to understand, if not to forgive.

We had plenty of excitement. One day a German aeroplane appeared overhead and proceeded to bomb us. The Russians were very angry, and they called it "ignoble warfare" to throw bombs at headquarters. For a time it looked as if they would take their revenge on us, but fortunately no damage was done, and they forgave us. Then we could hear the thunder of the guns coming nearer every day, and there was a prospect of our being released by our own men. One day the cannonading was more violent than ever, and the Russians told us the Germans were making an attack in force. After that the echoes of the fight grew fainter, and we learned that the Germans had been beaten off and were now retreating. Wounded began to pour in, and I had an opportunity of observing a Russian general speaking to his men. He addressed them in kindly tones, with an open, fatherly simplicity, very different from the rasping accents and calculated harshness which our generals thought good enough for us. The men listened, too, like children, staring at him vacantly with big, open eyes.

Then one day a large batch of Austrian

prisoners arrived and we were sent on by foot. For three weeks we marched, beginning somewhere near Minsk and ending, I think, at Smolensk. We had no maps and had only a vague idea of where we were. Every day we walked the distance between one command and another, receiving new guards at each command. As in Russia the guard is not set until twelve o'clock, it meant that we never started out before midday, whether the distance to be traversed was ten miles or forty. At first we slept in barns, but as soon as it grew cold we were put into peasants' houses, schools, or synagogues. The peasants received us with their native kindness and often gave us food over and above our rations. We were generally ungrateful guests. One old lady boiled a pailful of potatoes for us at supper and at breakfast, and in other little ways did all she could to make us feel comfortable. The men rewarded her by stealing all her spoons, knives, and forks that they could put their hands on. When remonstrated with, they replied that they were in a hostile country, and that they recognized no obligations towards the enemy. This principle, which is a matter of course in the German Army, explains those stories published in the *Cornhill* for September about the behaviour of captured German sailors. The enemy remains the enemy you are allowed to take any advantage of him you can, and no chivalry or friendliness on his part

can change this fundamental fact of the situation. The German magazines were full of stories in which a German by betraying a woman or some other act of base treachery gains an advantage for his country. The very characteristic, which in English stories is attributed to the German in hatred and disgust, they imagine to be admirable and acknowledge with pride. An account was published of how some survivors of the *Emden* were making their way across the desert—I believe in the neighbourhood of the Red Sea. They kept up a running fight with Arabs and were at last entirely surrounded. Seeing no way out, their commander desired an interview with the Arab chief, pledging his word that his life should be saved. The Arab refused to come, as he feared that he would be shot in spite of the pledge. The German narrator added, "And in that he was quite right. I should have shot him." The story struck me at the time as being more or less mythical, but, if invented, it is characteristic that just such an incident should be chosen and related with approval.

The Russian peasant at that time was living well. He often had meat for supper as well as for breakfast. To each cottage there was attached a number of outhouses, with room for a horse, a cow, a pig, and so on. We were surprised at how many animals there were in every village, and it was evident that Russia was far from being

starved out. The peasant's house consisted of one room. A broad seat ran along its walls, on this at night mattresses were spread out for the older members of the family to sleep on. In a corner of the room there was the stove—an enormous brick erection—and high up in its niches and alcoves the younger members of the family slept, while on the topmost perch the poultry found room. We spent the night on the floor, packed in hay or straw. The rising of the family in the morning always interested me. First the cock would flap his wings and crow, then one by one the girls and boys would come tumbling off the stove, and then the father and mother, gaffers and gammers, aunts and uncles would stretch themselves, and begin to get up. (They had no night attire and no bedding except the mattress and a pillow.) They then went out to wash. They took a small jug of water, filled their mouths with it, and then squirted the resulting liquid on to their hands and applied it to their faces. We never had any trouble with them, except once when we sat down to a meal without taking our caps off. They pointed to the ikon which hung in a corner of the room, and gave us to understand that they had been shocked by our irreverent conduct. I do not mention these details with any idea of laughing at our hosts. But I think it worth while to set down how the Russian peasant lived before the Revolution.

Our labourers were filled with amazement at the primitive workmanship of the Russians. The peasant is a jack-of-all-trades—agriculturist, carpenter, mason, wheelwright, weaver, and so on. The consequence is that nothing gets done well. The plough is as simple as Abraham's must have been. Our carpenters declared that in Germany an apprentice of fourteen could make better gates, doors, window-frames, and wheels than those they saw in Russia. The peasants often wore shoes of bast, even in the dirtiest weather, and in their general appearance they reminded me of pictures of Anglo-Saxon serfs I had seen somewhere. Sometimes the remarks of our men went too far. Russian pigs are sometimes bred from an English strain and show the tawny tiger-like markings of certain English breeds. This kind of pig was unfamiliar to my companions, and when they caught sight of it for the first time, they said, "Look there, they can't even tame pigs, they have only wild swine running about!" The more they saw of the Russian peasant, the more amazed our men were that Russia had been able to do so much in the war. They thought it almost impossible to build up an army with material of this quality.

We most enjoyed being in the synagogues. The Jews would come early in the morning to hold a service. They would put on the sacred robes and adorn themselves with phylacteries and

then begin to chant the holy words. Suddenly, quick as lightning, they would spit over their shoulders adroitly as a London cabman, or they would empty their noses between finger and thumb on to the floor, and then resume the solemn rise and fall of their chant as if nothing had happened. The very moment they had finished and disrobed, they began bargaining with one another with the same zeal that they had just shown in prayer. We were never tired of listening to the harsh, discordant jangle of their voices, not united, but, as it seemed, vying with one another in prayer. And I was never tired of hearing the explanation our Catholic workmen had to offer of all this jarring noise. Their priests had assured them that it was a punishment on the Jews, that ever since the time they had quarrelled over the fate of Christ they were doomed, when they assembled in the synagogue, to wrangle helplessly with one another and not to pray. We were quartered in synagogues as a deliberate insult to the Jews. Often the soldiers would break in on their services and send them away. They have not forgotten these things, and now that they are the masters of Russia, they are showing how consummately they understand the art of revenge.

Our journey took us across the Great Plain, through forests of birch and fir, or by desolate marshes, the infrequent villages forming our

halting-places for the day. This may sound monotonous, but scenery diversified by birch trees is never uninteresting, as the grey of their bark responds so readily to every change of light and colour in the atmosphere. I shall never forget one October morning, when I saw a rose-red sunrise over a forest of birch trees hung with the startling white of hoar-frost, the most beautiful sunrise, I think, that I have ever seen. Sometimes, too, on approaching the great towns we felt the charm and mystery of "Holy Russia" of story, when we saw the gilded crosses and domes of the cathedrals flashing splendidly in the sun and heard the deep melodious tolling of the bells. During the whole of our march we came upon women and soldiers digging trenches and throwing up new positions for the Russians to fall back upon in case of need. Even a hundred miles or more behind the front this work was still going on. My companions, who pretended to despise the Russians so much and to be so patriotic, disgusted me every time they saw these trenches. "Perhaps," they said, "the Russians will ask us to dig trenches for them and pay us." They were eager to help the Russians fight their own army, if only they got some money for it. And when they heard we were going to Siberia, most of them were ready to volunteer for work in munition factories. The Russians, however, allowed them no choice. The Germans showed

up still worse, when the Russian officers tried to get information out of them. God knows, I grudged the Russians nothing, but loyalty to the uniform I wore compelled me to withhold all I could. They would begin with me and ask me the strength of our company. Putting on as innocent an air as possible, I would answer that in Germany a company was reckoned at anything from two hundred to two hundred and fifty men. Whereupon my comrades would begin to snigger, and in a few minutes would be giving information that our company was not one hundred and twenty strong, that of these half were raw recruits, of these, again, half were "Ersatz-reserve," *i.e.* mostly men who had in times of peace been declared unfit for service because of some bodily weakness. Curious differences between Russian and German methods used to come out as a result of these interrogatories. The Russians would ask where we had been at the front, or where we were captured, and we would reply that we did not know. At first they would get angry and declare it was cowardly to say we didn't know; if we didn't want to tell, we had simply to say so. They added, a soldier never lies. But it was really true, we were always kept in the dark as to where we happened to be, and we did not know the names of the men commanding our division, corps, or army. Then the Russians would say that when they were in

East Prussia, they used to tell their soldiers everything; it was their plan to make confidants of their men. And then, as if to show they had only been testing us, they gave us all the information they had just been asking for, showed us the march-route of the regiment and exactly where it was at the time, adding all sorts of intimate details of which we had no idea ourselves. They knew all about the arrival of reinforcements within an hour or two of their coming to the front. Then we would be dismissed, the tale-bearers among us feeling rather bitter at having been played with and at not receiving the extra rations or the freedom from menial labour they had hoped for.

We got other glimpses of life in the Russian Army. Sometimes we would recognize deserters, Poles who had gone over to the Russians and donned their uniform. Once we saw one of our own spies. From time to time we would see regiments marching to the front, the first battalion armed with rifles, the others without weapons, nor would they get any till the first battalion was all dead or wounded. Or light munition columns would pass us by, none of the convoy armed except the leader. Then we began to understand some of the difficulties of the Russian position and how cheap our victories had been.

Wherever we halted at a village, the peasants flocked around us, as inquisitive and naïve as children. The women were always gay in scarlet

or yellow or peacock blue, or sometimes all together, and every one talking twenty to the dozen. My beard made me conspicuous, and I was asked three questions, my age, was I married, and how many children I had. I learned the answers off by heart (I knew no Russian at that time), but occasionally the questions came in the wrong order. So I found myself telling them that I had thirty-five children, was four years old, and had been married a year. Then they would all roar with laughter and shake their heads at me and think me a sad dog. When they found that I was a father, they opened their hearts to me immediately and adopted me as one of themselves, brought their children to me and made me say which my boy resembled most, this one or that one. The Russian peasant lives very near to nature. From time to time we came to Red Cross stations and were fed right royally. Permission to entertain us was always given to the Red Cross workers as a matter of course. Now, here is a point which let those explain who understand the hearts of men and of women. I with my beard looked far and away the oldest of the party. When we were lined up and a soldier distributed the gifts, he generally began with me and I came off best. But when a sister had charge of things, I was always badly treated. Sometimes the sister would quite pass me over, and that with a sniff which would have been annihilating if it had not

amused me so much. But in any case there is one point I should like to insist upon. In the course of a three weeks' march through Russian towns and villages, no one ever insulted us, or spat in our coffee, or poured water on the ground before us when we were thirsty. We were treated with open-hearted kindness and good will even by people who in private conversation proved to be politically red-hot Chauvinists. The German prisoners used to put this friendliness down to stupidity and to fear of the German arms, and they despised the Russians all the more for it.

Towards the end of our march we left the narrow lanes and came upon one of the great central roads of Russia, broader and better paved than any in Germany, with a strip of soft sand at the side for horsemen, and carried over the marshes on a high and solid dam like the Roman roads of old. This great road was as full of life as Piccadilly. Our men were furious at the large number of American motor-vans bound with war material for the front, both because they were American and because they were better than anything the Germans had. And then occurred one of those incidents which used to give the Germans such an immense feeling of superiority to the Russians. A large transport of horses had to be conveyed from one command to another. There were only a few soldiers and some hundreds of

horses, and various devices had been adopted to prevent the horses from running away. Some were bound together in companies of ten, the head of one horse being fastened to the tail of another. Or they were harnessed to wagons, three or four in front, two behind, and the rest at the sides. We were put in the wagons or even allowed to ride on horseback. On either side of our road was boundless steppe or open forest. Every time a motor-van came along, the nerves of the horses were upset, and they plunged wildly in all directions. Those that were free went careering over the steppe. Those that were bound head to tail insisted on tying themselves in a knot round the telegraph posts, taking a sort of mulish pleasure in the more entangling themselves the more we tried to untie them, so that it sometimes lasted three-quarters of an hour before we could get them free. The horses attached to the wagons all started off in different directions, and if they ever did agree, it was in the direction of the steppe. We got turned out into the ditch so often that we decided to continue the journey independently on foot, while the Russians, considering the horses more important than the prisoners, let us do as we liked. In four hours they brought those horses three miles. When it got dark, confusion became worse confounded, as the enormous headlights of the motors only made the horses shy all the more. How many were

lost, no one ever knew. We tramped on till the small hours of the morning, and found the night as interesting as the day. The forest was full of camp-fires where the Jewish pedlars had stopped to rest. They turn their wagons in among the trees, build a light lean-to of boughs as a shelter against the wind, and in front of the lean-to they make a big fire. Then they all lie down between lean-to and fire and cosily go off to sleep. I came upon a family of ten sleeping in this way, women and girls in the middle, men on the wings. The feet of the women were bare and stretched out towards the fire, and everybody seemed fast asleep, but I had not been there a fraction of a minute before the feet were withdrawn so quickly that you could not see how it was done.

At last the first winter snow drifted down and marching became impossible, so we were put in the train for Moscow. I had long wished to visit Moscow, but I saw nothing of it except Singer's Sewing-machine factory. This was a really fine building, as up to date as anything in Germany. Every peasant's hut we had visited had been adorned by Singer's calendars. They always set my teeth on edge a little, because their startling modernity was so out of place in the medieval filth and backwardness of the Russian village. At Moscow we were sorted out into our various nationalities. Germans, Jews, and Hungarians were to be punished by being sent to Siberia.

All the oppressed races from Schleswig-Holstein to Alsace-Lorraine, all Slavs, Rumanians, and Italians were to be kept in Russia. As a matter of fact, those who went to Siberia had the best of it in the end, because food was cheap and plentiful, while those who stayed in Russia were half starved. Other Germans were punished by being sent north to build the Murman line. One of the few men who survived told me that the men perished like flies. The country was a stretch of horrible marshland, and the moisture seemed to get into the men's constitutions and rot their bodies. The food was insufficient and of the wrong kind, and as a consequence scurvy spread through their ranks like a forest fire. The Murman line got itself built at last, but, it was said, at the cost of thousands of lives. Other Germans were kept at the front to repair bridges and throw up trenches—often under the fire of their own artillery. At Moscow a neutral consul presented each of us with three roubles and a copy of St. John's Gospel. It had been printed in German at Cambridge and was published by the British and Foreign Bible Society. The German soldiers were surprised that a British society should thus interest itself in the spiritual wants of the enemy. They were grateful, as the leaves of the booklet were just the right size and thinness for cigarette-paper. The Catholics were doubtful about the book, suspecting a Protestant

trap or some contrivance to proselytize them. On others of us the reading of St. John made an impression that would have been impossible in ordinary times. The very poverty of our circumstances allowed us to concentrate our minds upon it as we could never have done before. The impression made was not altogether a religious one, nor one probably that the Bible Society aimed at. But its poetry and fire worked upon us in such a way that, although I may forget everything else that came to me that year, I shall not forget the hours spent in reading St. John.

It was early November when we started for Siberia. Snow had already fallen, and the rivers were frozen over. Life in the country seemed to have died out, and the monotony of the eternal snow became intolerable. I began to suffer from snow-blindness, and at night to see visions which afforded me a strange mixture of almost intolerable pain and exquisite pleasure at the same time. Brilliant forms—purple, orange, scarlet, blue—danced before my eyes, and I thought I had never seen anything so beautiful, while at the same time my head was throbbing with pain as in fever. Siberia was at first an agreeable disappointment to us. We had always thought of it as a wild and barbarous place, and we were surprised to find it in many ways more modern than Russia. Baikal afforded us the pleasantest surprise. Most of us had never heard of it before.

We saw it under superb conditions. Never, even in Switzerland, have I seen a lake with a blue so gay or snow-capped hills shining so splendidly in the sun. Often we met train-loads of Russian soldiers on their way to the front, and they treated us as comrades. Some, indeed, asked us what sort of life prisoners of war led in Germany, and if we could give them letters of recommendation for any German who might happen to capture them.

We were fed on the same rations as the Russian soldiers themselves, receiving at least half a litre of good soup daily, with the meat that had been boiled in it. The meat was cut up on the dirty boards of the carriage, and then passed from unwashed hand to unwashed hand until it reached the man for whom it was intended. Twenty pairs of verminous, soot-black hands might have touched your meat before it got to you. In addition we had two (Russian) pounds of black bread per day. This was sour and so moist that you could sometimes wring the water out of it. The crown of our feast was the "Kasha," *i.e.* buckwheat or other porridge drenched in fat. At first we liked this better even than the delicious Russian soups, but afterwards in camp we grew so tired of it that we used to feed the pigs with it. If we had always received our rations they would have been ample. But on the railway our guards were changed every three or four days, and this system gave them a good opportunity of cheating us. We would

receive guards, say for Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. On Monday and Tuesday we would get our food ; but on Wednesday the guards would disappear without troubling about it, and the new ones did not give us anything till Thursday. The food for each man cost twenty-five kopecks a day, and as there were never less than six hundred and often over a thousand men in the transport, our little guard of ten soldiers made a handsome profit. The only Russians to treat us with perfect honesty were the Cossacks. Those of us who had money could buy as much as they liked at the stations. Food was good and cheap in those days. A pound of roast mutton cost fifteen kopecks, a roast fowl forty to fifty kopecks, a roast duck a rouble, besides there was white, grey, and black bread, every sort of roll and biscuit, cheese, ham, bacon, butter, milk, and many sorts of excellent fish. Each station was a new adventure, where you explored strange and unknown sorts of food. Sugar became rarer the further east we went, and at some stations could only be supplied to soldiers ; but we always had a supply.

We were a very mixed company, thirty, sometimes forty, men in a luggage van. We were mostly working-men, and the relations between them and the educated classes were very bad. They bore a grudge against us for being what we were, and tried by all sorts of pinpricks to make life a burden to us. The working-man dearly likes

overheated rooms, possibly because it is a luxury he cannot afford at home. They would go on piling coal on the fire till the truck was like a furnace; in the pitiless, unbearable heat our brains would seem to be bursting, and we would throw off nearly all our clothes. When they had got us so far, the working-men would suddenly open the windows and let in on us the icy Siberian winter air with its temperature of twenty or thirty degrees below zero. We knew exactly what to expect from them if ever they should get the upper hand in the State. The Socialists ruled among them unquestioned. They would hold forth by the hour and no one of their class said a word against them. The chief use of the German Army seemed to be as an institution for the diffusion of Socialism throughout the whole nation. Our labourers were mostly inclined to be rough bullies, but they were cowards, and let anybody alone who showed fight. None of them were above cringing, fawning, or begging. It used to disgust me to see men wearing the uniform of a great army begging for pitiful odds and ends that they did not really need. Their philosophy was simple. If they wanted a thing, they must have it; if they could not beg or wheedle it out of its owner, they must steal it.

They were all expert thieves. Even in Germany the working-man has no particular scruples about stealing. A friend of mine once had his house decorated, and the workmen left their ladder

behind. His groom noticed it and went to his master, full of joy, suggesting that he should paint the ladder green, so that the workmen should not recognize it when they came back to look for it. And he was astonished when my friend could not see how reasonable his proposal was. Our prisoners stole whatever they wanted or could lay their hands on. We "conveyed" coal to our wagon at every station. At another station we carried off a stove from some building because ours didn't suit us. Peasant women used to come to the train, selling rolls of bread. One man would occupy her attention by bargaining with her keenly, while from behind others would fill their tunics with rolls and make off. Once when I had just paid an old woman a rouble, and was waiting for my change, she caught a man in the act of stealing. He at once races off; she sticks my rouble between her teeth, gathers up her skirts, and pursues, I behind her, anxious for my rouble. Everybody on the station stood and shook with laughter. As the train moved out, I succeeded in getting my change, but found the old lady as big a rogue as any of them, she had cheated me out of half of it.

It was no use telling the soldiers that these women were peasants like themselves. They remained quite indifferent. The remonstrances they made to one another were illuminating. "It's all right to steal, but you might leave a little

for your comrades." "I don't mind stealing so much; but you might share with us." "It's selfish of you to attract attention by stealing like that; we can't steal now." And the soldiers who spoke thus are now the masters of Germany.

But there was one incident which shocked even them. On the way to Moscow our guards travelled in the truck with us. One Sunday they had been absent all day, and two comrades of theirs had taken their place. When they came back, they found that all their white bread had been stolen out of their knapsacks. With fine German tact we immediately suggested that their comrades had done it; but they quietly answered that no Russian soldier ever stole from a comrade. Upon this we offered to show them our knapsacks and prove our innocence, but with a certain dignity they put the matter aside. However, it mattered to us, so a general search of all knapsacks and baggage was ordered, without anything being found. One man was then observed to be getting rid of some white bread-crumbs, and on closer inspection we found remains of white bread by him. Upon this a Hungarian related that he had seen the theft, but, as he had no taste for tale-bearing, had held his tongue. We reported our discoveries to the Russian, who simply said God would punish the thief. We sent the culprit to Coventry, and he passed the time weeping bitter tears; but the Russian was

pointedly kind to him all the while he was with us, and when he went away shook hands with him in front of us all. There was not one of the Germans who did not feel the moral superiority of the Russian, and acknowledge that such a fine temper would have been impossible in a German guarding prisoners of war.

The thief happened to be a schoolmaster, and the incident made it impossible for educated men to exert their influence any longer. We had to sit and listen for days to jeers at the morality of the educated classes. The German soldier, unlike the Russian, makes no fine distinctions about not stealing from comrades. This same schoolmaster stole all my sugar once, and as his appetite was insatiable, he ate it up in a single night. Other "Kameraden" at various times relieved me of my towels and soap. Not that they desired a wash. They stole these things only to sell them again to educated men in the other trucks. Captivity mercifully numbs a prisoner's senses, and few things hurt. But the misery of continual association with companions of this kind tells upon a man as certainly as pain.

Indeed, I do not think it possible to paint the horror of this journey. Hunger, dirt, and lice—that was the burden of our thoughts. I did not get a bath or an exchange of linen between September 11 and December 9. And even in September I had been laughed at as a mad

Englishman for plunging into the cold river. Once I paid a rouble for hot water; but when the soldiers understood that I was going to waste it on a bath they commandeered it for their tea. We could keep our hands and faces fairly clean —if only by washing in the snow by the side of the railway. But our working-men never troubled, and our particular part of the transport was so dirty that the others called us the "Nigger Minstrels." We could not even get them to sweep the truck out periodically, but they used to let the dirt accumulate from week to week.

And then the lice. I shall never forget the first one I discovered on my collar-band. The horror of that moment never diminished, familiarity only bred deeper disgust. Every day we took off all our clothing and searched it; towards the end it was necessary to do so three or four times a day. We never found less than a hundred lice at a search. Verminousness breaks a man's spirit more completely than any other affliction; he loathes himself, and from self-loathing quickly falls into despondency and despair. Besides, we all knew that the louse was the carrier of that dread disease, hemorrhagic typhus, of whose ravages we had heard so much. Considering that the whole transport was in the same condition with regard to lice as ourselves, it is a wonder that no disease broke out on the journey.

Outwardly we were the merriest crew

imaginable. We had our professional clowns, who every night brought out the same hits of last season's music-halls. We had our professional "raconteur," a Pole, with a real gift both for story-telling and repartee, and who could make the dullest party lively. We had our soldiers' songs, reminiscences of the field and of the garrison, eternal discussions about Catholic and Protestant, Socialism and Capitalism, and a thousand other things to keep us going. And there was one unceasing subject of interest that rarely let us think of anything else, namely, when were we going to get our next meal. It is an uncertainty that would add piquancy to almost any situation.

At last, somewhere early in December, we arrived at our journey's end—a small Cossack station the other side of Lake Baikal, called Stretensk. Our stay began well. The Commandant asked us if we had any claims to make on account of money or food that had been withheld, and he actually allowed all we put in. Then we were marched across the frozen river to the camp. So far as we could see, this was a collection of low wooden and brick buildings stretching for about a mile on a plateau above the river. We were taken to a big brick barracks, and there left for the night. No preparations had been made to receive us; our new home was thick with dirt; outside, the temperature was many

degrees below zero, while inside, the stoves could not be lighted till the next day. We were a collection of scarecrows, so pitifully clad that it would have been a shame to expose us to a German winter, and we were in the wilds of Siberia; we were indescribably filthy; our bodies were a mass of festering sores; and yet the whole night the barracks was jubilant with song, chorus answered to chorus, and company vied with company in seeing who could sing longest and loudest; and our ragged regiment appeared rather to be celebrating carnival than its arrival at a prison. For three months we had not been able to send a letter, and now we had come to a place from which at last we could write home.

CHAPTER VII

SIBERIA

THE exalted mood did not last long, and by next morning we had sobered down. Few of us, I believe, expected to come out of that barracks alive. Already, in little more than a year, seventy thousand prisoners of war were said to have died of disease in Russia. Comrades of ours, who came from Novonikolaievsk, told us that in this camp forty-five per cent. of their numbers, or more than twelve thousand men, had died of typhus within a few months. The figures are probably exaggerated, but there is no doubt that the death-rate had been appalling. No one will ever know exactly how many lives were lost, because the Russian organization broke down under the strain of providing for so many prisoners, and we do not even know how many there were to die. From men who had been through such epidemics we heard terrible stories of how the sick were neglected in the hospitals, and of how the illnesses arose and spread. One medical student who was taken ill with typhus was put in a so-called "general hospital." The building dignified by such a name consisted of a long, low, narrow room, in which were packed men, women, and

children suffering from every kind of disease. On one side of my friend was a girl in the last stages of tuberculosis, on the other a woman expecting her first child. They received no medical treatment; no doctor ever visited the patients. My friend set about doing what he could for the people around him. Then delirium seized him, and when he recovered he found that the girl had died, and that the baby had come into the world and died too. He was used to hospital life, but the scenes of helpless, untended misery he saw shook even his nerve.

Or again, men from the camp at Barnaul who had been sent to Stretensk, described to us how the typhus swept through whole barracks at a time. Men died where they lay, and it was hours before anybody came to remove them, meanwhile the living had to get used to the sight of their dead comrades. We were told how the disease started at one end of the barracks, and you watched it gradually approaching you, man by man in the line being struck down, and only a few left here and there. You would wonder how long it would take to come to you, and see it creeping nearer day by day. Then one night you would wake up and find the man on your left dead of the disease, and some one on your right in the throes of delirium, and you would conclude that the disease had passed you by, and that for the present you were safe. The men from

Barnaul pointed out that all the conditions favourable for typhus were present—hunger, bad air, and dirt. The disease is often called "hunger-typhus" in German, and nothing encourages its development so much as malnutrition. None of us were well enough fed to satisfy the keen appetite engendered by the severe Russian winter. As for the bad air—ventilation was difficult in the barracks, because the outside air was so very cold. When we opened a window, it came pouring in, condensing at once into a thick, foglike vapour, which made everything clammy and moist. We could never open the window long enough to let the bad air escape. The atmosphere of the barracks was heavy with the smell of unwashed men, of damp, unswept floors, of clothes hung out to dry, of oily soups, and with the acrid reek of coarse tobacco. The men hardly ever went out, but preferred to lie on their benches all day, doing nothing but smoke. As for the dirt—we were supposed to bath regularly, but the attendant at the bath-house demanded a tip before he admitted anybody. The result was that some went every day, while others never had a bath at all. It was difficult to get in a daily wash. We were forbidden to wash in the barracks, because that made the floor dirty, and it was impossible to go outside in the cold and wash. The problem was solved by most men not washing at all, while others got up in the middle of the night, when it

was quite dark, and had a wash on the sly. For a week or two I cleaned myself with tea, as I could get no other water.

There were over eight thousand prisoners at Stretensk when the disease broke out, and to combat it there were two Austrian doctors. They had at their disposal a room capable of holding fifteen beds, and for medicine a quantity of iodine and castor oil. I once strolled into the hospital by mistake. I saw a number of beds on which men were lolling fully dressed, other patients were leaning against the wall, others were in various postures on the floor. It all looked so casual that I thought it was the waiting-room. An orderly drove me away, and explained that the men on the beds were dying of typhus, and that the other men were waiting their turn to get a bed and die too.

Our barracks had been built for occupation by Russian soldiers. It was a long, one-storied brick erection. Inside it was "double-decked," *i.e.* there were parallel rows of double platforms, one above the other. It would comfortably take about a hundred men, while four hundred of us were crammed into it. At night I slept with my neighbour's knees in my back, and my knees in the next man's back. Just so much space as we could cover lying on our sides was ours, and this was our sitting-room, drawing-room, dining-room, and bedroom. As the windows were coated with

ice inches thick, the barracks remained dark through the whole winter. The atmosphere, as I have already mentioned, was always foul. We were organized into groups of thirteen men, each of whom elected a corporal as leader; a certain number of groups again were under a sergeant. The labourers, of course, always elected one of their own number as corporal, and the educated men had a foretaste of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The labourer's dream of heaven is to lie on his bed all day, do nothing, and have his meals brought to him. They were now able to enjoy this paradise, with the additional relish of making the hated bourgeois fetch and carry for them. If you tried to avoid being made use of in this manner, and kept away from your place, they would fetch the dinner and eat your portion because you were not there. Appeal to the sergeant was useless, because he too nursed a grievance against the "upper" classes. The educated N.C.O.s were just as bad in their way. I tried an experiment on them by describing myself in the official lists as a "teacher." They thought that meant elementary school teacher, and treated me with that brutality which the middle classes show to a man a shade below them in position. They soon found out their mistake, and then came fawning to me, abjectly apologetic. It is the plain truth that there was no feeling of responsibility or good comradeship among our

N.C.O.s. They invariably treated us more roughly than the Russians did.

We had many different kinds of work to do. Sometimes we were water-carriers, and had to get up at four in the morning, go down to the river, and keep on ladling up water from a hole in the ice until we had filled a big barrel. This journey had to be repeated several times a day. Or we would have to stand for hours chopping wood, or make long journeys to the wood-stacks to fetch fuel for the camp. In the intense cold these tasks would have been severe enough in any case, but we were ill prepared for them. At the best we had only summer clothes on, none of us had any protection for the ears or nose against frostbite, many had no gloves, while a few had not even soles to their boots. It was no use reporting these things, our sergeant used to drive us away in a fury. The Russians were humaner and would often send us back with our tasks half done, because they saw that the cold was too much for us.

Our life at Stretensk was full of tragedies, but I think the first is the most awful to remember. One of us, who had no gloves, had been forced to carry wood long distances through the cold, and his hands were badly frostbitten. The sinews perished and seemed to shrivel up, and he became unable to use his fingers. As a consequence he could not louse himself, as his fingers could

neither grasp anything nor press even a louse to death. He became so verminous that in places the insects stood on him ten deep. His "corporalschaft," fearing for themselves, expelled him from their midst. He pilgrimed all over the barracks, seeking a place where he might lay his head, was everywhere driven off with contumely and insult. The floor being too wet even for him to sleep on, he at last found an asylum in a sort of dustbin, in which the refuse of the barracks was removed every morning. He lived absolutely alone, like a leper. His food was set apart for him every day, and he was jealously watched lest he should come too near. The self-loathing peculiar to verminousness seemed to eat up his moral fibre, and he acquiesced in his isolation as if it were quite proper. Now and again, indeed, he would make timid advances, with a pitiful smile, but he was always repulsed. The last time I saw him, he was sitting on the snow in the full blaze of the noonday sun, clad in a smart uniform he had just received, and feebly trying with his palsied hands to brush off the lice that had already begun to collect on his new clothes. That evening he was taken to hospital with high fever, and in two days he was dead, literally destroyed by lice.

But one day the barracks was swept and tidied up as it never had been before, and each of us was sprinkled with some disinfectant or other. We were at a loss to interpret these signs, when

it was suddenly whispered that a German Red Cross sister had come on an official tour of inspection. As she entered, we all stood up to honour her. In that remote and inclement land, amid all the dangers with which we were surrounded, not a man of us but was moved at the sight of a fellow-countrywoman, speaking our own language, and bringing with her into the squalor of our barracks some suggestion of home. Her opening words deepened the impression. "I have come," she said, "to remind you that you are not forgotten in the Fatherland." And then she went on with the professional society lady's fine air and as if she were only repeating words learnt off by heart: "Your Kaiser does not forget you, and the dear Crown Prince thinks of you every day." A thrill of contempt ran through our ranks. We had been expecting the bread of sympathy, and she offered us the stone of an aristocrat's patronage. In one respect it saved the situation, for it calmed our feelings and enabled us both to speak to her and watch her depart unconcerned. She did obtain some alleviation of our lot; for instance, she persuaded the Russians to dismiss and punish the soldier who kept the bath-house and had to be tipped before he would allow us inside. Arrangements were also made that the N.C.O.s and educated privates were to receive small sums of money, varying according to their rank. The common soldier was to receive

nothing. Our working-men were justly incensed at this favouritism, because their need was just as great as anybody else's. The working-men have good memories for injustices of this kind, and in the final settlement with the bourgeois they will not be forgotten. The arrangement did not last long, and after a month or so everybody was thrown on his own resources, unless he chose to beg from the Red Cross. I understand that the British Government allowed all of their prisoners in Germany without exception a weekly sum. When our working-men heard how much better the English prisoners were treated, they became very bitter against their Government. I asked the sister to get the Russians to separate the educated soldiers from the uneducated, as had been done with the Austrians. I said we were quite willing to work, but we wanted to be our own masters. She made some excuse, and the proposal dropped for the time. When the working-men heard about it, they were furious and threatened to kill the man who had brought it forward, if they ever discovered his name.

And then one great day there arrived two Swedish Red Cross sisters with unlimited money at their command and wonderful parcels for us all. We received a complete outfit for prison life in Siberia, changes of warm linen, knitted helmets, gloves, boots, soap, towels, spoon, fork, basin, pencils, postcards, sewing-materials. Besides,

there was for every one who desired it a uniform and a mantle. The old blue uniforms discarded for active service had been sent to clothe the prisoners of war. The Russian soldiers were amazed. They said, "When war started, we received a uniform and two changes of linen, and now these are all in rags and our Government gives us nothing. But you are prisoners of war, thousands of miles away from home, and you are as well looked after by your Government as if you were still at the front." A great trade was done in the Red Cross gifts, especially when the parcels began to arrive from home, and the spring came with the warmer weather. Many a Russian soldier that year went to the front clad from head to foot in garments which had been collected for us through the loving self-sacrifice of the women of Germany. Those prisoners who kept their things were much more smartly dressed than the Russians set to guard them.

But all these improvements came too late. Typhus had already got such a hold of the camp that it was impossible to stamp it out quickly; one could only let it run its course. The disease began in another camp on the hills overlooking Strétensk on the opposite side of the river. This camp had been built as a temporary summer residence for refugees; in winter it was next to impossible to heat the barracks or to fetch water. For days men would only be able to quench their

thirst by breaking off the ice on the windows and sucking it. The first patients came down to our camp to be treated, and not finding a doctor ready to receive them, went all over the place looking for friends, and so brought infection to every barracks.

The horrors of Wittenberg have made the disease known to all English readers. The Germans call it "fleck-typhus," *i.e.* spotted typhus, because on the third or fourth day small red spots appear on the forearm and other parts of the body. But until these spots appear, the disease is often hard to distinguish from influenza, and the doctors hesitated at first to put the patients in the typhus-ward, but kept them in an observation hospital instead. One man in an observation ward was sufficient to infect all the rest, so that many, who had only influenza to begin with, caught typhus at the hospital. This got to be known, and the men would not report themselves ill so long as they could contrive to stay in the barracks, which of course only spread the disease still further. There is a kind of delirium characteristic of typhus, in which the patient gets out of bed and seeks some place familiar to him. Often they used to get up, rush out into the icy Siberian night and go back to their barracks, thus again spreading the disease. Their comrades, in terror of their lives, used to chase them out, and sometimes they would be

unable to reach their hospitals, their strength would fail, and they would fall dead on the path. Typhus searches out the weak parts of the body and its sequelæ may be almost as dangerous as the disease itself. Many men, after finishing with typhus, went on to inflammation of the lungs, enteric, or tuberculosis, others were partially paralysed, all will carry some mark of it down with them to their graves. After the epidemic had passed, the camp was full of cripples.

In fairness to the Russians it must be said that as soon as they realized the danger, they did everything in their power to fight the epidemic. They sent a special hospital staff with doctors, nurses, and beds complete. Some of the Russians contracted the disease themselves while nursing the prisoners of war. The Russian doctor was constantly in and out of the hospitals, although he was a married man with a wife and children to whom he might easily have brought the disease. German, Austrian, and Turkish doctors were gathered from various parts of Siberia and sent post haste to Stretensk. In a short time there were twenty doctors and medical students at work. The Swedish Red Cross provided medicines and stores, and gave a large amount of money. Theoretically it was always possible to obtain more by telegraphing to the Central Red Cross Bureau at Petrograd, but I doubt if a telegram would have gone through. A number of buildings were fitted

up as hospitals and observation wards, so that it became possible to separate the various infectious diseases from one another. But at the best everything remained primitive and rough. The prisoners used to say that the Russians were doing it on purpose in order to kill them off as soon as possible. They forgot that they were living in the wilds of Siberia, and that the Russian soldiers themselves would have been no better off if an epidemic had broken out amongst them. The sanitary conditions were indescribable. At the height of the plague there were three patients to two beds, and you might wake up one night to find a dead man on either side of you, and so you would lie through the long hours till morning came. The corpses were taken to a little wooden house and there kept for weeks. There was a gruesome story of an Austrian who went to plunder the dead and got shut up for a whole day among the stacks of corpses. The ground was frozen too hard for a spade to turn, so all night we could see the glare of the fires on the hills burning a hole into the frozen ground to make graves for the dead. Only officers were buried with a religious service. We used to see the dead bodies of our comrades fetched out of the morgue and flung like so many sides of bacon on to a sledge and borne off to the graveyard, where they were thrown into the earth without any ceremony. "Did these bones cost no more

the breeding, but to play at loggats with 'em? Mine ache to think on't."

But gloomy as the picture was, it was made still darker by the treachery of our own men. There was no trained hospital staff at first, and it was necessary to take for orderlies men who could speak Russian. The only prisoners who fulfilled this qualification were Austrian and Hungarian Jews. They could speak Russian, partly because a Jew can always learn a language when it is likely to bring him any advantage, but also because they were the first to desert and had been the longest in captivity. Where one Jew comes, others follow, and in time practically all the orderly work was in their hands. Whatever the patients brought with them to hospital was stolen as a matter of course. Their fine new uniforms were taken away on a pretence that they were to be disinfected, but they were never brought back. The Jews sold them, and gave the patients that recovered torn and shabby garments for which there was no sale. They ate the nourishing rations provided for the sick, and left their patients to starve. The biggest scoundrel was a man called Flesch. Sometimes Flesch would load a sledge with Red Cross stores, such as rugs or warm underclothing, drive off to the town and sell to the Russians the things of which his own comrades stood in such bitter need. By some queer stroke of cunning he managed to keep the

orderlies in his hospital under subjection, and no one stole without his licence. Honour among thieves! When a man died, Flesch was fetched to dispose of his effects, and a certain ritual was always observed in these affairs. If he left much money, Flesch would say a long prayer for his soul; if little, he would turn away with a sneer and say that as he had left only a few kopecks, a short paternoster would be enough for him. The Catholics may find what consolation they can in the circumstance that this master rogue was of their Church, although he was undoubtedly of Jewish descent. There were horrible ghoulish stories at the hospitals of patients who did not die quickly enough, and of orderlies hovering round their bed, waiting for them to breathe their last, and then suddenly losing patience, rushing in on them and snatching their money from them while they still lived, or even taking their pillow and hastening their end by suffocation. Now and again the patients resisted, and, with a strength born of despair, would just be able to throw off their assailants before they died. And some recovered and lived to remember, as through the mists of an awful dream, in what terrors Death can be arrayed.

But even worse remains to be told. I have already mentioned that the Swedish sisters left a large sum of money at Stretensk. If this had been properly spent, a great deal of suffering

might have been prevented. Strong nourishing food might have been bought for those who were not yet ill, and the disease would not have spread so quickly. The Austrian doctors in our camp made good use of the little money they received. In the other camp on the hill there was a German Jew, Dr. Kallenbach, and he is said to have wheedled out of the sisters enormous sums. A portion of the money was ear-marked for definite purposes, but even this he contrived in part to embezzle. He was instructed to give every qualified doctor £10, he only gave them £5. He had orders to give a certain amount to the Turkish prisoners, who were worse off than any of us; most of this money he kept for himself, and then falsified his accounts so as to make it appear that the Turks had received everything. No one knows exactly how much he stole. A certain proportion, of course, found its way to the prisoners for whom it was intended. The rest Kallenbach is said to have invested with a chemist living at Stretensk, a Jew with whom he was on intimate terms. If so, the local Soviet has probably scattered it to the four winds by now. While the common prisoners in Kallenbach's camp were starving, their doctors were enjoying the best of everything. Their banquets became a byword. The doctors down in our camp messed for eighteen roubles a month each, and for this sum lived as luxuriously as ever at home. The doctors on the

hill messed for thirty-five roubles a month. It is a puzzle to me, with food as cheap as it was then, where they got the appetite to eat at all.

What knavery had begun, cowardice completed. The other German doctor, a Gentile this time, when he saw that the disease really was typhus, proclaimed himself ill and took to his bed. He stayed there for some months, until all danger was past. He asserted that he himself had typhus. The Russian doctors laughed and declared it was impossible, but with characteristic good nature they left him alone. He was the only doctor who had received the Iron Cross. He had a young medical student, Heinze by name, who waited on him all through his illness, practically taking sole charge of him. When he got home again, he was going to recommend this man for the Iron Cross too—"for devotion to duty in trying circumstances."

Another arrant coward was the Turkish doctor, Remsi Seki. He was said to be a son of Abdul Hamid. Whether that is true I do not know; but at any rate his mother had been in the Sultan's harem and had afterwards been married off to a high official. He was the most contemptible poltroon I have ever met. At a certain stage in the reconvalescence from typhus an abscess often forms in the neck, and death ensues from suffocation if it is not lanced in time. It is a very simple operation, which anybody can perform.

When cases of this kind occurred, Remsi Seki used to stand wringing his hands, looking at the patient in terror, unable to move. At last, after a number of patients had died through his incompetence, the orderlies themselves, untrained as they were, would rush in and do the lancing. After a while he was dismissed from the hospital as utterly useless. He was the typical "unspeakable Turk," a man of gentle and winning manners, affecting shyness as good form in Turkey requires, shrewd at judging the weaknesses of others, but incapable of strong action himself, though tenacious in his purposes, given over to unmentionable vice, and at heart terribly cruel. When he heard of the Armenian massacres he expressed his joy and said they were quite satisfied. None of his bad qualities prevented him from being a prime favourite with the Germans, who used to extol his fine and noble character.

But it must not be supposed that all the doctors were like these Jews and Turks. There was another side to the medal. The Austrians worked manfully to stem the tide of disease. And there were examples of heroic self-sacrifice, worthy to rank with any deeds on the battlefield. There was the Austrian officer Harman, who at the outbreak of the epidemic volunteered to help in disinfecting the barracks. He was over forty, and he must have known that he had little chance of life if he caught the disease. He went from

barracks to barracks, doing his utmost to better the circumstances of the men, always ready with a joke or a cheery word of advice. He fought the causes of the disease, the dirt, the bad air, the vermin, the prisoners' sloth and the indifference they displayed to their condition. Such a fight could not last long, the inevitable happened, and he perished of the disease. Other Austrian medical students also succumbed. Of these we may surely use the phrase so hackneyed in Germany and say that they died a hero's death for the Fatherland. Their gravestone stands on the bleak Siberian hillside, an enduring memorial to their courage, a reproach to their less worthy comrades. Every year on All Souls' Day, the Catholics in Austria and Germany celebrate their Feast of the Dead. Lights are placed on the graves and sometimes food is set out. In old days the people thought that on this festival the spirits of the dead revisited the earth, and the lights were to guide and the food to sustain them on their long journey. On All Souls' Day, 1916, the Russians, who under the old *régime* always respected religious observances, allowed the medical staff to leave the camp and go up to the graves on the hill. We found the candles burning just as at home, and we all stood with bared heads in reverence to the dead. The scene was penetrated with a mournful irony. Below slept the unfortunate and the brave, and there came to do

them honour the cowards who had deserted them, the thieves who had robbed them, and the murderer who had killed them just as certainly as if he had driven a sword into their hearts.

I have said so much against the Germans that it is a pleasure to bear witness to the courage of two of their numbers. Heinze, the student already mentioned, was surpassed by no one in his attention to the sick. He had caught so many diseases during the various epidemics he had fought, that people would think I was romancing if I were to give the list. And there was a young student of philosophy from Bonn who had the orderlies under him at a particular hospital. He waged a perpetual warfare with the Jews, doing his utmost to prevent them from robbing the patients of food and money. He spared himself neither day nor night, and was so heedless of danger that at last his doctor had to give him an express command to keep out of the sick-room. In the end the Jews were too strong for him, and they intrigued him out of his position.

It will never be known how many the epidemic carried off, because at first the men died so quickly that they could not be counted. The doctors estimated that in three months eight hundred men, or ten per cent. of the prisoners, died. The disease being not particularly virulent, the mortality was only about twenty per cent. of

the patients. We may reckon that about half the camp caught typhus. We have only guess-work to go upon, because the dishonest doctors intentionally falsified their sick-lists. The Jewish hospital orderlies, who had undertaken the work merely to enrich themselves, nearly all perished. Some time in the winter of 1916 a prisoner found smuggled in a parcel he had received from home, a German newspaper containing the Red Cross Report on conditions in Siberia. It accused the Russian hospital attendants of infamous cruelty, scandalous neglect of their duties, and shameless thieving. The Austrian doctors got hold of the report and read it to one another with shouts of laughter. "Why," they said, "it wasn't the Russians who did that, it was our own men. The Russians wouldn't hurt a fly." I suppose the same thought has occurred to all my readers. This story makes the horrors of Wittenberg intelligible. You cannot expect the Germans to be kinder to the English than to their own soldiers.

It was always a puzzle to us afterwards how we could have passed through that time so light-heartedly. We saw our comrades, suddenly stricken with the disease, stagger off to hospital, a day or two afterwards we saw their corpses flung on to the sledge and hurried away to be buried with less ceremony than a dog. Or, if they came back, it was as broken and crippled men, shadows of their former selves. We knew that any

moment the same thing might happen to us. And yet we were outwardly as merry as the day was long, and we were never without a song or a jest on our lips. That peculiar numbness of prison life, which I mentioned in my last chapter, kept us from feeling our position too acutely. But when everything was over, a strange horror of it all took possession of us, and we could not bear to look back. One incident stands out especially in my memory. It was months after the epidemic had finished. We had just been celebrating Christmas; the dinner had been excellent, probably far better than any of our families at home had been able to procure, and we were in that warm and comfortable frame of mind which a good Christmas dinner usually brings about. Suddenly some one observed, "Why, of all us ten, Price is the only one who didn't get fleck-typhus." Our talk and laughter instantly stopped, and our evening's amusement was killed. Once more the grave seemed to open at our feet, and Death to take his place beside us, a familiar guest.

CHAPTER VIII

CAMOUFLAGE

A STRANGE turn of Fortune's wheel delivered me from the worst of the epidemic. There was at Stretensk an officers' camp, jealously guarded, to which ordinary prisoners were not allowed access. The Hungarian officers, when they heard of me, petitioned the colonel in command that I might be allowed to go and give them lessons in English. The colonel refused even to consider it. Then one day a Hungarian officer came to me with the following proposal: We will transfer you to our camp by putting you down on the list of officers' servants; once you are with us, however, you will live as an officer and be treated quite as one of ourselves. I lost no time in accepting, was immediately transferred, and became for the Russians an officer in the Austro-Hungarian Army.

At that time no letters had arrived from home, the Red Cross work was still unorganized, and very few prisoners knew of the existence of Frau von Hanneken's organization, so that there was a great dearth of amusements, and people were only too eager to learn English. I soon had five classes a day. I had no grammars and no books

of any sort to teach from and had to make up every lesson out of my own head. But the hard work was an undisguised blessing, it enabled me to forget where I was, and the days began to pass more quickly.

The cheat we were practising could not long be concealed from our guards. Every officer had to sign his name in a book twice a day. The soldier, whose business it was to bring this book round, was bound to notice that I never signed it. He was easily pacified. The Russian state paid him seventy kopecks (about 1*s.* 6*d.*) a month for his services. I bought them for a rouble a month, with occasional tips for odd jobs. He was only dangerous when in his drunken fits, which were not infrequent. Then he would burst suddenly into the class and point at me and say, "You are not an officer, you are a teacher; you are a naughty man, but I will forgive you. Come, let us shake hands." After we had shaken hands, he would minutely examine his greasy palms to see what might be found there. Once he came in maudlin sorrow and said, "You make me very unhappy, you give my conscience no rest. I want to go to church to-night and cannot. God does not love me, God will be very angry with me—unless you give me twenty-five roubles at once." "Well," I said, "how about twenty-five kopecks?" His purple face lighted up with joy and he was again my friend. He was not always to be

bought, however. One night he came storming into our rooms, more drunk than usual. He called us to get up (it was about two o'clock) and said he would take us into the town on the spree. Then he caught sight of me, and shouted, "No, I cannot take you, you have that wicked man among you. I must go to the colonel and tell him all about it." In his drunken frenzy he seemed quite capable of carrying out his threat, and no bribes or cajoleries of ours had any effect. At last we hit upon the expedient of treating him as his own officers did, and bullied him hard. We beat his soft will to pulp, and before long, trembling with fear, he began to fall on his knees and kiss our hands, begging us to overlook his offence.

Such scenes gave me a distaste for the life I was leading. I felt that immunity from typhus could be too dearly bought. Further, while the Hungarian officers treated me with finished courtesy, even with a sort of deference as to their teacher, the Germans took a pleasure in embittering my life in all the ways they could. Proverbially we can find strength to support the afflictions of our friends, it is their good fortune that is so hard to bear. The Germans simply could not forgive me my stroke of luck. When, therefore, the Austrian doctors approached me with an offer that I should live with them, going into the officers' camp every day to give my lessons, I was very glad. My evenings and Sundays I

spent with the doctors. Every morning a doctor went to visit the officers, I, with a Red Cross band round my arm, marching behind, ostentatiously carrying a big bottle of medicine. Every day the sentry challenged me, and every day the doctor answered in the only two words of Russian he knew, "My servant." Every afternoon he came to fetch me back, every afternoon the sentry challenged us, and every afternoon he answered in the only two words of Russian he knew, "My servant." The medicine had originally been intended for some officer, but it proved to me such a magic "Open Sesame," that he had to go without. From time to time the Russians were seized with a suspicion that unauthorized people were on the premises and they would make surprise visits. They would order everybody out of the buildings and call the roll in the courtyard. In the meantime the soldiers would search the empty barracks for people who ought not to be there, see me quietly reading, give me a brotherly grin, and pass on to the next room. Once during these proceedings I was carelessly standing at the window, when a soldier down below recognized me. He made frantic signs to get out of the way, lest his officers should catch sight of me. Wrongheadedness and topsyturvydom could go no further.

Everything comes to an end at last, and so did this double life. Five officers had planned to

escape. They had arranged with the sentry that each should pay him twenty kopecks. The first four paid and got through, but the last one, being a Jew, objected to paying and scrambled by for nothing. The sentry promptly rang the alarm-bell. The colonel was the first to arrive and he found the sentry in tears. He demanded to know what was the matter. "Why, just think," said the sentry, "five Austrian officers promised to give me twenty kopecks if I would let them escape (boo-hoo-hoo), and I did let them escape (boo-hoo-hoo), and then the last one did not pay me anything at all (boo-hoo-hoo)." The colonel, quite properly I think, boxed his ears, and degraded him on the spot. The Russians were very angry with the escaped officers and wished to make an example of them. They could not find out their names because all the books had already been signed up, and they were not equal to the task of going through each room and finding out who belonged there and who was missing. But they set round the officers' quarters double guards and enjoined on them the necessity of keeping a sharp watch. In spite of the care they took, all the fugitives managed to slip back into the camp that night unperceived. Then the Russians, determined to have no more nonsense from the officers, built all round their camp a wooden enclosure some ten or fifteen feet high, and strengthened it at short intervals with towers

from which sentries could overlook the whole section. There was only one entrance, a massive gateway, and this was always watched by four or five men. My career as a teacher of officers was at an end, and from that time till I left Stretensk I lived with the doctors. All the Russians in the camp except the colonel knew that I was there *per nefas*, but it made no difference. I even gave lessons in the families of Russian officers. At first the attitude of the Russians puzzled me, and I put it down to that peculiar element in the Russian character which, according to the circumstances in which we meet it, we call good nature, or fatalism, or simply laziness. But in the end I found out that nearly all the officers were there for a special reason; they were Poles, or Jews, or Germans, or political suspects, and had been sent to Siberia partly as a punishment, partly to get them out of harm's way. A few of them favoured the German cause, some came from districts occupied by the Germans, and would naturally not be inclined to do anything to prejudice their position with their German rulers. There was a Polish officer who rejoiced at every German victory, and wished disaster to the Russians more heartily than the prisoners themselves.

The Russians were subtler than we gave them credit for. They ringed in the officers with a high fence in order to prevent escape, but they also used finer means. They told us fearful and

wonderful tales of the Buriat tribes swarming beween us and the Chinese frontier. These men were so fierce, they said, that they would murder you for the sake of a button, and then they would bury you somewhere in the vast desert, and no one would ever know your fate. The Chinese smugglers and bandits were still worse, for, with a refinement of cruelty denied to the less developed Buriats, they would put you to exquisite torture before killing you. These stories the Russians would pour in upon us with such a ready, unpremeditated air, such wealth of gesture, with so much humour and goodfellowship, that they inevitably carried conviction. Chinese tobacco-smugglers used to come to us and offer to convey us across the frontier for three hundred roubles; but we never dreamt of listening to them. People who know the country intimately have since told me that these stories were pure inventions, that the Buriats are a comparatively harmless race, on whose honesty one could rely, and that the smugglers would probably have kept their part of the bargain if we had kept ours. A spice of danger there would naturally have been in adventuring with them, but not more than was pleasant. The officers were eager to escape, because those who succeeded got a step in rank. It was perfectly easy to buy from a Russian soldier his uniform and equipment, but not his mastery of the Russian language. Most of the

enterprises failed because the prisoners were forced sooner or later to buy food, and the moment they began to speak with the natives, their accent betrayed them.

The climax of these attempts to escape was such a story as has never been heard of outside "Alice in Wonderland," or the "Arabian Nights." After several other enterprises had been frustrated by difficulties about food, some officers conceived the idea of carrying with them on their own persons enough to last them into China. We used to compute the distance at nearly two hundred miles. Our maps were very primitive, and our only idea of the route was to strike south. The officers began to collect tinned meats gradually, so as not to excite suspicion. They also managed to get hold of several pounds of a hard sort of sausage, called in German, "Dauerwurst." Besides, they reasoned out that, as they were not to go near any building all the way, they would be obliged to wear enough clothes to keep them warm while sleeping in the open. So they started off, bulging mountainous with the extra clothes they wore, swathed round with sausage, packed tight with tins of corned beef and Bismarck herring, till they looked more like knights in a pantomime than anything else. The Russians soon discovered that some prisoners had escaped, and ordered the officers out in order to count how many they were. Arithmetic is a thing the

Russian does not shine at; the officers did their best to create confusion by continually moving about and making a noise, and in the end the Russians, instead of counting seven too few, made it twenty-five too many. They did not know what to do, so they sent in a report that they had counted twenty-five too many, which they explained by supposing that twenty-five officers were away ill in hospital. This calculation was beyond me, but as I also am weak at mathematics, I leave it where it is. Meanwhile the Cossacks had been alarmed, and they started off in pursuit, plunging through the camp on their hardy Siberian ponies, and we soon saw their scattered parties scouring the hills. Even a fox-hunt will seem tame to me now, after I have smelt the excitement of a man-hunt. The fugitives had bribed a soldier into letting them have a sledge and horses, but that only took them a day's journey. Then they proceeded on foot, sleeping by day and marching by night. In that glittering, smooth expanse of snow their tracks were easily picked up, and, burdened as they were, they could not hope to shake off their pursuers. The Cossacks surrounded them, but dared not attack them, and so the two parties lay for some time intently watching one another Finally the fugitives stood up and showed that they were unarmed, and the Cossacks were emboldened to approach them. Then began a

characteristic scene. They began trying to bribe the Cossacks into letting them go. But the Cossacks were coy, and made a great show of offended honour, and by artful bargaining put the price up until they had wrung the last kopeck out of the fugitives. Then, penniless, but still rich in clothes and sausages, the prisoners were ordered to march back to camp.

So far as I remember, only one attempt at escape on a large scale was really successful. That was when some officers hired a motor-boat to take them down the Amur till they reached Chinese territory. At the same time two other officers were to put the Russians on a false scent by starting off by train and getting captured some way down the line. The trick succeeded to perfection ; the Russians continued to search for the other fugitives on the railroad, and the men in the motor-boat got clear away to Manchuria, and eventually to Tientsin. In the spring of 1917, after the first Revolution, an order from the Austrian and German Governments was circulated through the Siberian camps that no more prisoners were to escape to China, as they would only be interned, and the camps there were much worse than in Russia. Whether there was any political motive behind this order I do not know, but in the summer of 1917 those prisoners who wanted to escape went westwards through Russia. There was a brisk trade in forged passports,

Russian or English by preference, and it was easy to get to Petrograd. I do not think it would have been so easy if there had been more English consuls in Siberia to look after matters of this sort. How the prisoners managed to cross the frontier from Petrograd I do not understand. It was quite impossible on an Allied passport. But the letters we received from Germany proved that somehow or other they did get home at last.

The frequent attempts at escape, like my surreptitious life, can only be understood by those who know the venality with which the Russian state was honey-combed. Chehof has a sparklingly malicious story of a Russian gentleman who goes to a Government office to make some inquiries. He is shown into a room where several officials are busy writing. He wanders about for a long time, ignored by every one. Finally he receives a hint from the porter that a gratification is expected. He lays a banknote on the desk of one of the officials, who adroitly slips a book over it and goes on writing. At first he does not understand this manœuvre, but light breaks in upon his mind, and he lays a banknote for a much larger sum on the desk. The official wakes up as from a trance, recognizes his visitor, does the necessary little piece of business, and escorts him to the corridor. The gentleman is so overwhelmed by his politeness and condescension that

he feels obliged, on leaving, to convey to him still another gratification. . . . Such, or something like this, is Chehof's story.

Our colonel was a nobleman who had seen much service, and when he was in full dress, his uniform was decked out with a fine array of orders and medals. In person he was diminutive and bandy-legged, but he had the aristocrat's clear-cut, energetic features, flashing eyes, and delicate, well-kept hands. But he was chiefly distinguished by his long, white, exquisitely silken whiskers. Diminutiveness, whiskers, energy, bandy-legs combined to make him irresistibly comic to our men, who used to call him the " Hampelmann " (monkey on a stick). In drunkenness he yielded nothing to his soldiers, and I have seen him reeling through the camp, after a night spent over the bottle, denouncing punishments on everybody who crossed his path. When he was angry he used to draw his sword and strike with a scythe-like sweep at our legs. We easily ran away from him, and, once we were at a safe distance, there was not a soldier would have lifted a finger to bring us back to him again. For an officer and a nobleman his career had been peculiar. He had been commandant of the camp at Dauria, where suspicion had fallen upon him of embezzling state funds. His accomplice, a Greek civilian, was sentenced to a long term of penal servitude, while he himself had been punished by being removed

to Stretensk. Here he transferred his attentions to the money of the prisoners. All the sums sent to us were kept in the bank a certain period, until he had received his percentage on them. He was always issuing regulations cutting down the amount of money we might receive a month. At one time it was no more than five roubles. His accomplice at Stretensk was a banker from China, who, I regret to say, belonged to the Church of England. He was probably what the Jews call an Old-Protestant, *i.e.* one who has been baptized comparatively late in life. This amiable pair used to buy sugar for the camp at low rates long before it was needed, and then sell on a rising market, and the prisoners would have to go without. Once, however, the general on his tour of inspection discovered that the prisoners had no sugar, and the colonel had to buy it all back again on a market that had meanwhile risen considerably. The meat rations of the prisoners were regularly cut down far below what the Government allowed, and the difference went to fill the pocket of the colonel and his friends. They also kept pigs in the camp, and it was believed that the bread supplied to us was so bad in order that we might the more readily be induced to feed the colonel's pigs with it. As a rule, we found that the officers who were hard with us were worse to their own men, and it is certain that the Russians hated the colonel far more than we. They used

to tell us that he was afraid of going out at night because he was sure to be killed if he did. This seems fantastic; but the fact remains that he never came to us after dark.

The colonel did not stand alone, there was corruption in every branch of the administration. The hospital kitchen was in the hands of a Polish Jew and his wife. They had begun the war with almost nothing, and they were now said to be worth thousands of pounds. No money was paid by the kitchen but some stuck to their palms. His staff collected money for a water carrier, and gave it to him to disburse. He put it in his own pocket, and used to pay the man out of Government funds. His soldiers were so angry with him that at the outbreak of the Revolution he was one of the first they impeached. He was sent to Irkutsk to await his trial, but the case dragged on interminably. After the Bolsheviks came in he was released, and when I last heard of him he was occupying some position under their Government.

Like master, like man. The minor officials squeezed all the money out of us they could. If a window was broken in a barracks, they fined every prisoner who lived there, and reaped a sum sufficient to glaze all the windows in the camp. The Russian clerks in the colonel's office treated us just as if we had been Russians ourselves. Every petition had to be accompanied by a tip

adapted to the importance of what you wanted, otherwise it simply found its way to the waste-paper basket. The prisoners took advantage of these customs to spin intrigues against one another with the Russians. A German medical student made application to be considered as such, *i.e.* that he should be removed from the stuffy barracks to the doctors' quarters, receive a salary, and enjoy considerable privileges. He accompanied this application with ten roubles for the clerk. Heinze, the medical student I have already mentioned, was jealous of his colleague, so he over-tipped him, and gave the clerk twenty roubles to keep the application back. The clerk, of course, pockets the twenty roubles, and then after some time informs the first man how the matter stands. So by whetting the one against the other he reaped a golden profit. All our letters and parcels had to be paid for by tips. If we stopped tipping, we received nothing. The prisoners were, of course, forbidden to send letters except through the prisoners' censorship, but all the while I was at Stretensk I conducted with friends in England an extensive correspondence that never went through our censor's hands. To put the Russians off the scent I used to describe myself as a fur-merchant. In one letter I pretended to be a lady, wrote in a very round hand, underlined every other word, and described how good Russian eau-de-cologne was for my headaches. My

correspondents were mystified; I had offers of capital for my fur business, and a letter of very tender sympathy about my headaches.

In fact, everything had its tariff. The Regulations existed only on paper. Those who wanted to, and had enough money to pay for it, could go into the town every day. It was simply a question of establishing a connection with the soldiers, and making your custom so valuable that they would not like to lose it. The clerks in the colonel's office often came to me and threatened to denounce me, if I did not pay them a certain sum down. I pointed out that, if they did denounce me, they would lose a profitable source of income, because, once I had returned to the barracks, they would make nothing out of me. After that they left me alone. We were supposed, like everybody else in Russia, to have two meatless days a week. A certain amount of meat was weighed out and handed over to us, and officially we were not allowed to have any more. As a matter of fact, we never confined ourselves to our rations, we had meat every day and as much as we wanted. Russian soldiers would come and sell us a whole pig or a sheep at prices far below those ruling in the market. We had great fun getting these animals into our house without our guards noticing it. It had to be done at night, windows had to be wrenched from their frames, and sentries posted all around to give warning of the approach of

obnoxious persons. Or if we wanted boots, soldiers would supply us with the leather and get them made for us at half what it would have cost an ordinary Russian. We had our own ideas as to how it was possible to supply us so cheaply, and we never asked where the goods came from. The peasant women kept us supplied with butter at a time when the housewives in Stretensk could get none. It was not done out of love for us, but because we were ready to pay any price they asked. The sale of alcohol was forbidden throughout Russia, but whenever we wanted wine we got it. The common prisoners were often cheated. One of the guards would come up in the twilight and offer a pound of sugar; you would buy it, and when you got in you would find that they had passed off on you a pound of salt or of sand. An enormous trade was done in smuggling beer and confectionery into the camp from the town, but it was nearly always ruined by tale-bearers. Sooner or later there would be a quarrel about the division of profits; or even the mere sight of a comrade getting rich would be enough to send some Austrian Jew sneaking off to the Russians.

The prevailing dishonesty had its bitter consequences for us. Our parcels from home scarcely ever arrived intact. They were regularly plundered, and the contents sold in the town. Once a Chinese coolie appeared in the barracks in order to sell us cigars from a box which still bore

the address to one of our number. My wife in despair used to put a picture of St. Antony of Padua in her parcels. She had heard that the Russians were superstitious, and would respect parcels protected by the saint. But their sense of humour was still greater than their superstition, and I used to receive parcels out of which everything had been stolen but the picture of St. Antony.

We got strange and terrible glimpses of what all this corruption meant for private Russians. Our dentist was in need of instruments, and wished to ask a lady dentist living in Stretensk to lend him some. He could not approach her directly, and was obliged to ask the Russians to act for him. To his surprise they all refused point blank. He could not understand why it was, and after much pressure they told him the lady's history. Some years before she had been denounced to the Secret Police, and they had made a raid on her lodgings. They discovered nothing to justify their suspicions, but they told her that if she did not pay them blackmail they would report that they had found certain incriminating documents in her house. She indignantly refused, and, relying on the justice of her cause, wrote an account of the whole matter to the Governor-General at Irkutsk. She so far succeeded in clearing herself as to escape punishment in a court of law. But from that time onwards she was a suspect, a marked person, and no one in the Government

service durst have anything to do with her. Few of the officers had much affection for the old *régime*, some were even Bolsheviks, and yet so great was the terror exercised by the Secret Police, that not one of them would speak to the lady.

The whole administration of the camp was corrupt. Of all the officers I know only two that were honest. One of these was a Bolshevik—the regimental doctor. He was a poor man, and might have acquired a fortune by declaring rich recruits unfit for service, and yet he remained resolutely and unchangeably loyal. Some men were ready to pay £500 for such services. Everything was forbidden and everything was allowed. We were prisoners, and lived like lords. Whatever of luxury or pleasure there was in Stretensk we could enjoy, only we had to pay a little more for it than ordinary mortals. Unlike ordinary mortals we knew nothing of rent, taxes, or insurance, we had neither wife nor child to clothe and feed, and so it generally happened that what we wanted we could pay for.

What a world! you say. A nobleman and officer cheating prisoners of their food; the common soldier falling in abject humiliation and kissing the hands of the enemy he was set to guard. Yes, that was Russia before the Revolution.

CHAPTER IX

HUMAN NATURE

I HAVE often been asked how I managed to endure the boredom of captivity, and few people believe me when I answer that, far from being dull, it was a period full of fascination. The camp in time became like a great university, there was scarcely a subject that was not studied, and on which you could not inform yourself, through the books the Red Cross sent us. And then there was the spectacle of the Siberian seasons. We were said to be living three or four thousand feet up, and rain only fell on forty days in the year. In that dry, crisp mountain air our senses acquired a keener edge of enjoyment, and life a sparkle it never had before. The year was a succession of delightful surprises. In winter the sun shone, as it seemed, with passion all day long in a sky of cloudless and radiant blue. Through some rare quality in the atmosphere the whole western horizon at sunset glowed one rich and lively red—a daily spectacle which alone made life in Siberia worth while. The nights were even more wonderful; the stars were so much brighter than at home that it seemed as if we had never known them before; and on moonlit nights the landscape with

its impressive contrast between the broad, glistening snowfields and the sombre precipices rising above the river, was almost sublime. Spring came; the camp was smothered in white blossom, and the hills were purple with autumn crocus and rhododendron. Never again can spring be so intoxicating as in that year; life, which had been dammed up by the gloom and horrors of winter, suddenly raced along like a cataract. In summer we heard the cuckoo calling from the woods all day, and in the evening we enjoyed a rare luxury. At sunset a chill north wind set in, chasing away the almost intolerable heat of the afternoon, and bringing from the forest scents of birch, bracken, and strange aromatic shrubs. These evenings were the climax of the year. Then, with dramatic suddenness, came autumn; forest and field turned a brilliant yellow (there are no dull colours in those hills; everything strikes vivid and sharp). As suddenly autumn disappeared; as if by magic the trees were leafless and the corn gathered in, and the desolation of winter had begun. We lived a double life, enjoying this feast of the senses, while within us changes were going on which only gradually became apparent. Men not yet thirty began to grow grey, while those approaching middle age began to look like old men.

At Stretensk, too, there were concentrated representatives of all the races at war from Hamburg to Baghdad, and merely to live with

them was a political education. First of all, there were the Russians. With the common soldier we were on the best of terms. This brought us several advantages, but to the Russians only harm. The prisoners of war exercised a steady corrupting influence. Many a Russian soldier left Stretensk for the front provided with letters recommending him, in case of capture, to mercy and good usage, because he had treated the Germans or Austrians decently. Our men used to spin the Russians wonderful yarns of what a paradise Germany was for prisoners of war. They did their best to terrify their guards by telling them tales of mysterious German inventions, against which it was impossible for the Russians to fight. Even before the Revolution, the complete breakdown of the Russian Army had been prepared for by the work of the prisoners. The higher classes of society were corrupted in a subtler way by the love-affairs of the prisoners. There were daughters of Stretensk manufacturers whose lovers had quite brought them round to an anti-Russian and especially anti-English point of view. I met one of these girls later on at Irkutsk, and she was an effective pro-German propagandist. Her talk was filled with sneers against England and Italy, from which I inferred that of her lovers one had been a German and another an Austrian. The women whose husbands were away at the front were the worst. Much was written about

it at the time in the newspapers, but no reports ever came near the truth. I do not know if I should call these grass widows cynical, but they certainly made no attempt to keep up appearances. Watching them, I recalled Milioukof's famous words, "In Russia we lack the binding cement of a common hypocrisy."

Outwardly, nothing seemed so firmly established and vigorous as the Russian State. The drills went with a swing; on the march the soldiers sang their fiery patriotic songs as only Slavs can sing, and every day closed with the traditional prayers and the solemn music of "God save the Czar." But there were already indications of the direction events were about to take. The men never concealed from us their hatred of their officers, and in public their officers did not spare one another. There was once to be a review, and we were allowed to watch it. A subaltern superintends the drawing up of the troops and reports to the captain that everything is ready. The captain gives a hasty glance at the men and raps out a terrible Russian oath, which I could not possibly translate. "———," he said, "can't you draw up your men better than this?" The adjutant comes, and treats the captain to the same oath; the colonel comes and does the same to the adjutant. Finally, when every one was tense with expectation, the general arrived. The soldiers off duty, anticipating something

extraordinary, were watching from all sorts of hiding-places, some peering through the palings of a fence, some mixed up with us, others even had climbed up on to the roofs, and were peeping from behind chimney-stacks. The general took one look at the ranks, and then, in the presence of the assembled troops, hurled at the colonel exactly the same oath that the others had used, following it up with a stream of the coarsest invective. Our guards could scarcely contain their delight, their glee reminded me of children when Father Christmas appears. Afterwards they came to us, exclaiming, "Did you hear the wigging the colonel got? Wasn't it fine! Isn't the general a splendid fellow?" Scenes like this explain why it was so easy for the Russian soldiers to turn upon their officers after the Revolution. They had never been taught proper respect.

And then there were the captured Turks with their subject races, the Greeks and Armenians. The more I saw of them, the more enraged I was that the Turks were ever allowed to lord it over nations whose shoe-laces they were not worthy to unloose. The Greeks used to tell us how at home they would be obliged to kow-tow and salaam to the Turks, and with what subtle insults these barbarians would impress on them their inferiority. I lived for nearly two years in the same house with the Turks, and came to know them as is only possible in such circumstances.

I found them charming at first, but gradually their character revealed itself as mean, perfidious, cruel, stained with every vileness open to human nature. The Greeks had abilities, range of intellect, strength of character far beyond the reach of the Turks. They were my best pupils, and would compare favourably with any that I have had at Bonn. The common Greek soldier was an ingenious fellow, not afraid of hard work, and he earned a fair living by his talents. The Turkish soldier was backboneless and dull, too lazy to do anything but beg, and he even stooped to accepting alms from Armenians. No solution of the Turkish problem ought to be tolerated which leaves a single Greek under the dominion of the Turks. The Greeks are still a race as gifted as any on the face of the earth; given freedom, it is impossible to foresee what they may make of themselves, and it is a crime against humanity to deliver them over to the repressing rule of the Turk. There are even now newspapers which profess to regard the Turk as a gentleman, and are pleading that he should be spared. Unfortunately the Turks appear to know just what note to strike when appealing to Europe. The interview with the Turkish Crown Prince, that has just appeared in the papers, is a characteristic example of Turkish "slimness." He deplored the Armenian massacres, had opposed them from the first, everything was the fault of the wicked Germans,

and so on. And he probably looked all the while he was saying this as if butter would not melt in his mouth. When I read it I seemed to see the Turks of Stretensk again, their silken accents, their girlish shyness, their faces so lighted up with kindness that they seemed far too good for human nature's daily food—and leering behind it all unspeakable foulness and corruption. We must harden our hearts and see to it that the friends of the Turk are not listened to again.

Tartar newspapers used to circulate in the camp, and Greeks who could read them told me that they were all written in ironic depreciation of the Russians and the Allies, and by subtly worded phrases they pleaded the Turko-German cause without seeming to do so. The Censor did not see that a dangerous propaganda was being carried on under his nose. There are some millions of Mohammedan Tartars in the Russian Empire, and there is no doubt that these newspapers exercised a powerful influence on them. It appears probable that, even if the Revolution had not broken out, there would have been grave trouble with the Mohammedans in Russian Central Asia.

Then there were the Hungarians—really a wild Asiatic race still, and scarcely tamed by Europe. When they were at their games, no one else cared to play, it was much better fun watching the Hungarians. Their excitement,

laughter, and shouts filled the camp. At times they quite lost control of themselves, and once, when things were going badly with them in a football match, they drew their knives and made a concerted attack on the opposing centre-forward because he was kicking too many goals. At Christmas-time the wild, barbaric music of their hymns was splendid to hear. Their educated classes were always gentlemen, and, as the traditional sympathy between Hungary and England did not seem to have suffered by the war, intercourse with them continued to be pleasant. Many Hungarian officers spoke to me about their intentions of settling down in England after the war was over. They scarcely seemed to regard themselves as at war with England. Caution will be necessary in resuming relations with any of the enemy, but it would be impolitic roughly to brush on one side advances that may come from Hungary. There is a good deal of the untutored savage about the Hungarian, but he has not the deliberate barbarity of the Hun.

The Austrians were not particularly hostile to England either; their venom was reserved for Italy and Germany. They distinguished themselves from the Germans by being able to speak frankly about the war. They said quite openly, we meant war and we did not intend Serbia to escape this time. And they gave their reasons: the last time they had mobilized against Serbia,

the troops had remained under arms for nearly a year, and it had cost Austria many millions of pounds, besides the damage done through loss of trade. They said that could not be allowed to happen again. Such motives are too weak to excuse the guilt of a world-war; but I could not but respect their honesty. They never put the blame on to anybody else. The Austrians did their best to educate the Germans, and to create in them some kind of moral feeling. They used to point out that the wrongs and cruelties committed by the Germans in the war must inevitably bring a bitter punishment, sooner or later. The Germans used to stare at such ideas, mouth and eyes wide open. They could not rise to the conception of a moral law which you defied at your peril. For answer they would assert, we are so strong, no one can touch us. In one respect the Germans showed a greater sense of self-respect than the Austrians. You never saw a German N.C.O. as an officer's servant. The Austrian N.C.O.s did not trouble about their rank, and I, a private, had an Austrian sergeant as my servant.

Our amusements were the same as those of all prisoners of war—learning languages, study in some branch of science or art, music, and all sorts of indoor games. We had a professional "Kapellmeister," one or two professional musicians, actors, and clowns, an orchestra, and a fine choir, so that our evening entertainments were

quite worth attending. Thousands of books were in circulation. They were the one thing the Russians did not steal from our parcels. Whatever we wanted we could get by writing to Frau von Hanneken, head of the German Red Cross organization in China. The Red Cross centre at Tientsin became much excited about the fights for Verdun. We used to receive postcards saying that Uncle "Nudrev" was in a bad way, his back had been broken by a fall, and the use of his arms and his legs was gradually failing him. Unfortunately for the pious hopes of the Tientsin Colony, Uncle Nudrev enjoyed a most wonderful cure.

"The man recovered of the bite,
The dog it was that died."

The Red Cross stores sent by Frau von Hanneken continued to be misused. Certain Hungarian-Jewish medical students desired to visit the Stretensk Yoshewara, but found it rather expensive to keep up. So the chief Austrian doctor, himself a Jew, used to give them Red Cross stores to live on, in order that they might save money for their vices. And men were dying of tuberculosis in the barracks because they could not get enough nourishing food. It is not my intention to make fun of Frau von Hanneken; she is a lady to whom I am indebted for many services, and it is no exaggeration to say that millions of men will remember her to their dying day with unbounded gratitude. I am only

concerned with the Jews who rendered useless so much of her good work.

In time the different classes shook down and came to live together in better harmony. Quarrelling of course was frequent. The officers were said to have taken three thousand protocols, *i.e.* three thousand formal notes had been sent in by the officers, accusing their colleagues of some breach of military discipline. The educated soldiers and the working-men came to live apart, and immediately began to understand one another better. Even the thieving revealed itself only as an expression of the good old Shavian principle: "Thou shalt starve ere I shall starve." I was never tired of listening to the life-stories of the working-man. They had nearly all travelled outside Germany. It seems that the German Trades' Unions have special funds in order to keep up hostels for their members in various towns throughout Europe. A member of the Union travels almost free, except for his railway fare. The German butchers were great travellers, and they knew all Central Europe. The stories of their adventures seemed to come out of the Arabian Nights. Here is one that happened to a butcher at Brussels. He was out of a job, and was wandering along one Sunday very disconsolate. Two servant girls met him, and, struck by his woeful countenance, they tried to cheer him up. They went to the cinematograph together

and drank their coffee, and afterwards the girls refused to say good-bye to him, but took him to their home. Apparently they had been left by some count in charge of a fine house, and here the butcher lived for a few weeks the life of a Belgian nobleman. He wore the silks and fine linen of the count, smoked his cigars, drank his rare liqueurs, perfumed himself with his exquisite scents, and even descended into his marble bath. Then one day the girls came to him and said he must go, as the count was expected back. That night he returned to his old haunts and had a supper of pigs' trotters swilled down with beer: he thought it was the nicest in his life. "Isn't it curious," he added, "that the nicest parts of a pig are also the cheapest?" I ventured to disagree. "Why," he said, "everybody knows that pigs' trotters, pigs' ears, and a pig's snout are the nicest parts of a pig, and they are much the cheapest."

Most interesting of all was to watch the development of the German mind. They were no longer exposed to the influence of the Government newspapers, they were free to think and speak as they had been at home. There was no limit to their stupidity. They all believed that America would not dare to enter the war, because the 500,000 Germans in the States would be too strong for them. It was surprising with what unanimity they believed that every German in

America would be a traitor. When America did enter the war, they said it was a great advantage for Germany, because now the States would not be able to supply Europe with any more ammunition. And all these ideas they arrived at without any help from their Government! Most men would probably rather be thought a knave than a fool, and really I think their folly alienated me more than their knavery.

Their knavery was real. I long tried to separate people from Government, and to believe that their savagery was only something enjoined from above. I found it quite impossible to make any distinction between Government and people. On our high-days and feast-days poems used to be recited glorifying Germany's part in the war. The Germans are great at amateur poetry, and it is the tradition of the Fatherland that there shall be no festival without its poem. Our Stretensk poems glorified more than anything else the killing of women and children. These compositions were greeted with loud cheers from every one present, so we may take it that they express the feelings of the German soldier. In one poem Father Christmas related how he had come to Siberia by Zeppelin, by U-boat, and by railway, and how he had first flown over London and killed a thousand women and children. Another poem celebrated the bombardment of Yarmouth in the winter of 1914–15. (It will be remembered

that the Germans, misled by the placing of the buoys, did not succeed in reaching the land with their shells at all.) The poem related how Yarmouth was battered into ruin, and then the last lines described how the rising wind brings the sound of wailing. "Does that mean the wailing of women and children? Of course it does, and a splendid thing too." Loud applause from all sides welcomed this sentiment. From that time onwards my only thought was how to renounce my German citizenship.

Of course I was spied upon, nor had I any right to complain of this. It is the custom in every army. But from the very time I entered the army traps were set for me in order to lure me into some incriminating statement. Under the mask of friendship, people were always trying to worm themselves into my confidence in order to find out what was in my mind. The German takes to spying naturally; it is a trade that agrees with his predilections. It was not always possible for me to be wise. Once at the beginning of the captivity, when I was suffering from high fever, I was stung by something they said, and told the Germans what I thought of them. I have a confused memory of a roomful of soldiers running at me; but I put up my fists, and they kept their distance, the more so as the Russians at once interfered. Later on I lived in the same room with two Austrian doctors and a very young German medical

student. The Austrians and I used to have long talks about the war, in which both sides were perfectly frank. One day I was told that the young German was in the habit of taking notes of all I said, and running off with them to Remsi Seki and Kallenbach. This noble pair of brothers spent a great deal of time discussing what punishment I should receive when I got back to Germany. After I had made up my mind to have done with the Germans, I had a splendid game of cat and mouse with them. I was able to sound all the depths of a Jew's guile. Kallenbach smothered me with protestations of friendship, he nearly wept on my shoulder. Often he would pretend to be a Socialist and inveigh against the Kaiser, or, in the most plausible and convincing tones in the world, speak of the cruelty shown to British prisoners in Germany. Then suddenly he would pause—his face glowing with noble feeling, his eyes glistening with the tears ready to fall—and wait for me to open my heart to him. The acting was so perfect that, in spite of all I knew about him, it seemed impossible that he could not be genuine. He put his satellites to try the same tricks on me. If I had agreed with them on a single point, he would at once have written a protocol about it, which in time would have been added to my "dossier" at the regimental headquarters at Cassel. I used to speak freely, but just within the allowed limits, about

any matter they chose to bring up, until I could see their eyes almost starting out of their heads in expectation of what I was going to say next, and then I would turn the conversation. Next day I generally received a report of what they had said of me behind my back, and of the rods which their imagination had laid in pickle for me.

Then there came a day when the Russian and the German doctors were exchanged, and Kallenbach and his company went home. It was a difficult matter for them to get their protocols through, because the Russians would not allow them to take a single scrap of paper with them. Even the novels they had provided themselves with were confiscated. There was a great scene of preparation for departure, hair-brushes were taken to pieces, and notes written on cigarette paper packed in between the boards, boots and furs were unpicked, and protocols sewn up in them. When Kallenbach left he had smuggled about his person reports on the behaviour of every German in Stretensk. He thought by being a zealous tale-bearer to curry favour with the authorities, and to place his own loyalty beyond a doubt. That might have helped him under the old *régime*, but I doubt if anything can save him if he falls into the hands of this Government.

And then there came an interval of three or four days without any tidings from the outside

world. Wild rumours were flying about, but the wildest was surpassed when the news came through that the Revolution had broken out and established itself almost without bloodshed. At Stretensk things for a moment looked serious. The old colonel gathered his regiment together and delivered a fiery address, calling upon the soldiers to stand true to the Czar and country. He was very busy in measures to counteract the Revolution, and endeavoured to get into communication with Irkutsk by means of telegrams in cipher and in other ways, but the Revolutionaries already had everything in their power and were easily able to frustrate him. Finally, upon instructions from Irkutsk, his second in command deposed him and took over his responsibilities. The colonel was a thorough rascal, deservedly hated by all his men, and he knew it, yet he took his life in his hands to defend his order. Hats off to the old *régime!* The later Governments of Russia have not produced men capable of fighting for them with the dignity, courage, and devotion with which this old blackguard of a colonel fought for the Czar.

The prisoners of war passed through some anxious days. There were rumours that the Revolution was before all things anti-German, and that all the German prisoners were to be killed or at least tortured. Our guards reassured us, saying that even if ordered to shoot us they

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would not do so. Our greatest danger came from our own Hotspurs, who wished to make a sudden rising and seize the camp with all the munitions it contained. They argued that, if that were done in every prison camp throughout Siberia, so much damage would be inflicted that it would be impossible for Russia to carry on the war. We should go under, no doubt, but meanwhile we should have done our duty to the Fatherland. But the new commandant sent a note to the officers, requesting them to show the same loyalty to the new *régime* as to the old, and to use their influence to keep their men from regrettable excesses. Our officers sent on a command to us to keep quiet, and the danger passed by.

In the Russian Army the Revolution at first made slow progress. The soldiers of purely Russian descent were puzzled and not a little irritated by the loss of all their old landmarks. They still clung to the idea of Czar and Church. However, as I have already mentioned, the Government had been in the habit of sending their Polish soldiers to Siberia to get them out of the way. This policy now began to bear fruit. With almost a devilish glee the Poles set about bringing over the Russian soldiers to the side of the Revolution. They wasted no time on ideals or high-falutin' principles; they simply stated that for every peasant the Revolution meant a big house, a lot of land, and freedom to do what he

liked in the army. It was a gospel easy to understand, and in a few days the Russians were going about saying they would kill all the rich men and each get a big house for himself. They refused to stand guard round the camp against the prisoners of war, alleging that so many prisoners got into the town as it was, that it was no use keeping watch over them. The last thing I heard about the soldiers was that they were going to the ginshops every night, and selling their boots to buy more gin, coming home barefoot in the small hours of the morning. The new commander went about wringing his hands and declaring it was as much as his life was worth to interfere. The Poles chuckled at the turn events had taken, and continued to pour oil on the revolutionary fire.

Soon after the Revolution began, I left Stretensk to take up a position at Irkutsk as a tutor in a Russian family. It was difficult to leave Stretensk, although I had never been hungrier, dirtier, in greater danger of my life, or in worse company than I had been there. It seemed that human nature had yielded up its last secrets of vileness and treachery, and that no more illusions were possible for me. I have been asked what is the effect of such experiences upon a man. It is difficult to give an answer that shall not seem merely sentimental and weak. But there are two sides to the medal. I was at Stretensk a marked man, and those who were my friends

were also marked men. Their names were noted down and reported to their regiments because they were friends of the Englishman. They had nothing to gain by knowing me and a great deal to lose. And yet I had friends as good and trusty as ever a man had, and I owe to their companionship memories that I shall value till I die. Human nature passed the examination, even of Stretensk, with honours.

CHAPTER X

PROPAGANDA

In dealing with the Russian Revolution I shall leave on one side those aspects that have already been treated by other writers. Not much has been written on Siberia yet, and what has been given to us is mostly the product of scared journalists, flying for their lives, and generally in far too much of a hurry to verify their facts.

I shall always count myself fortunate that I was let out of my cage in time to see the Revolution before it had grown old. To experience that wonderful burst of joy, which followed the breaking of age-old chains, was the crowning event of my life. The whole nation was feverishly happy, and suddenly alive with hope and confidence for the future. All the mistakes that had crippled Russia's conduct of the war were attributed to the Czar's *régime*, and now that that had passed away, it seemed simple to go straight ahead and win. The soldiers for the first time in the war were full of enthusiasm. They were well paid, the control of their circumstances was largely in their own hands, and, whenever anything displeased them, they were free to complain or remove it. There was a moral earnestness, a self-reliance,

and a pathetic eagerness to justify the freedom that they had won, which all combined to give to the Russian soldier for the time being a new character. Inevitably, in writing of these events, my mind goes back to those three wonderful chapters of the "Excursion," in which Wordsworth describes his experiences in the early days of the French Revolution.

> "A people from the depth
> Of shameful imbecility arisen,
> Fresh as the morning star! . . .
> Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,
> And to be young was very Heaven!"

And if our sympathies have been alienated by the later horrors of the Revolution, the same excuse holds good for Russia that Wordsworth in his hour of blackest despair found for France. These calamities are not due to particular persons, they have been caused by

> "a terrific reservoir of guilt
> And ignorance filled up from age to age,
> That could no longer hold its loathsome charge,
> But burst and spread in deluge through the land."

Just about the time of my arrival at Irkutsk there took place the first great manifestation of the popular will after the Revolution. It was the demonstration in favour of the Len strikers. About five years before, the goldminers on the River Len had struck against their miserable rate of pay. They had assembled and marched through the streets, but without arms in their hands and

with neither the intention nor the means of doing violence. The governor refused to listen to them and simply ordered the soldiers to fire upon the defenceless crowd. Two hundred were killed outright. This needless butchery sent a thrill of horror throughout Russia. A question was asked about it in the Duma, but the minister responsible merely answered with cynical insolence, "Tak bylo tak budet" ("So it was, so it will be"). This phrase became proverbial in Russia; it fixed irretrievably the attitude of the Government towards all pleas for justice and reform. The fifth anniversary of the affair came round just after the Revolution had established itself, and the new Government decided to celebrate it by a great procession in honour of the fallen. All Irkutsk took part, including even a deputation of Chinese coolies. It was the climax of the Revolution. For the last time all the forces working for liberty combined to show a united front. It is impossible to describe the joy and eagerness of the population, the feeling not only of freedom but also that the old bad things were done away with for ever. No one dreamed that within a few months slaughters more terrible than those of the Len were to redden the streets of Irkutsk itself. I went to see the procession and was bitterly disappointed. The soldiers who took part were supposed to be celebrating a high and solemn occasion, and yet they shuffled and slouched

through the streets as no good soldier does, even when he is off duty. The heartiest enthusiasm was shown by the Anarchists and extreme groups, men whose wild, undisciplined faces were livid with rage and hate, but showed no signs of any higher emotion. With characteristic brutality they ruthlessly shoved aside any woman or child who got in their way or tried to join their part of the procession. Only the small group from the Officers' Training Schools showed themselves worthy of the occasion. They marched with fine soldierly bearing and dignity, but behind their restraint it was obvious that they felt the greatness of the cause they were celebrating. In fact, the procession exhibited in little all the weaknesses of the Revolution. Despite the joy of the crowds, it did not exalt me, it only left me profoundly depressed.

From this point onwards there came a gradual worsening in the situation. The criminals in Siberia were released on a promise that they would join the army—a double folly. It not only set them free, but it also provided them with arms. At one time there were said to be ten thousand criminals in and around Irkutsk. Robbery and murder were rampant. Men were killed in broad daylight in the open streets. Whole families were slaughtered at once. Most of the crimes were committed by men in soldiers' uniforms (I cannot bring myself to call them

soldiers). The Anarchists joined in the merry game by organized attacks on barracks and Government buildings where they suspected money was to be found. As winter came on and the days drew in, the fun became fast and furious. In our direction things were very lively, and we could hear the shooting going on all night long. We lived just on the edge of a lonely common studded with low bushes. On the one side of us were the barracks; on the other, about a quarter of a mile off, the first straggling houses of the town. The regiment supplied the thieves, who used to lie in wait behind the bushes for any one coming home after dark. I shall not easily forget an evening when I took my little pupil to a cinematograph show in the town. As it did not end till late, I thought it would be best to take a "droschke" home. My pupil implored me not to; he swore we should be murdered if we did. Finally I persuaded him it was best to ride, if possible; but now the question was to find a "droschke." Not a man would come. They all said it was as much as their lives were worth to go near our regiment, and in the end we were forced to walk. Not far from our house there was a bridge over a stream, where people were murdered every night, and where, a few days before, a peasant woman had been killed for the sake of her boots. As I took my pupil's hand and we threaded our way in the dark night between the

mysterious bushes, it seemed as if all the thrills in the old nursery stories had come true. I knew now how Jack felt in the house of the Giant, and what it was to be hunted by the Bogey-man. Inmates of our house drove into the town every evening. When the firing was too intense, we used to telephone down and warn them to stay in the town. They always insisted on having the carriage sent to fetch them. The coachman used to set off, an old fowling-piece between his knees. If it came to a scrap in the dark, he preferred shooting with a cartridge to a bullet. They never stopped us, but one night a wounded officer just managed to crawl to our doorstep and lay there, groaning in the moonlight. The sight of his agony made me think I should always hate the moonlight afterwards. The officer had met four soldiers who had asked him for a light, and as he stopped to hand them a matchbox, one of them had drawn a revolver and had fired at him point blank. Soldiers would lie on the ground pretending to be wounded, and when any one came to bend over them and help them, they would knife their rescuer, take all his money, and make off. No help was to be expected from passers-by. A lady of our acquaintance was knocked down in a crowded thoroughfare and robbed of some valuable furs that she was wearing, but no one lifted a finger to protect her. When she went to the police, they looked very wise and said, "Well, if

you will tell us who took your furs, we will get them back for you."

Not that Kerenski's Government did nothing. On the contrary, they did all they could to keep crime down; but the difficulties in their way were enormous. The old professional police had been disbanded after the Revolution and sent into the army. The safety of the town was entrusted to militia, who, whatever their zeal and bravery may have been, were at the best only amateurs. They could not cope with the professional criminal. With each fresh development of crime the militia system was extended, pickets of two or three men, heavily armed, were stationed at certain points all night long, and more dangerous areas were patrolled by soldiers. Just as the Provisional Government fell, it was elaborating a scheme for employing some hundreds of soldiers as extra police in the town. But nothing would really have improved matters except sending all the professional criminals back to prison, and hanging all those Anarchist and Bolshevist agitators, who were never tired of telling the soldiers that it was right for them to take whatever they liked, wherever they found it.

I need scarcely dwell on the economic difficulties of Russia. These have been treated by so many pens. The fall in the value of the rouble, the closing of the frontier to the importation of foreign manufactures, the destruction of Russian

factories, and the gradual disintegration of the railway system owing to strikes fomented by the Germans and the Bolsheviks, the consequent scarcity in all the shops of things to buy—all this is known. But one noticeable effect of it in Irkutsk has not been recorded—and that is the growth of the "yellow influence." When I went to Irkutsk, Chinamen were market-gardeners, laundrymen, coolies, and small shopkeepers, and the Japanese had a few unimportant businesses. But with the growing anarchy of the Russian business world, shop after shop went bankrupt, and the place of the Russian tradesman was immediately taken by a Chinaman or a Japanese. When I left Irkutsk, the yellow men had the largest shops and were doing the biggest trade. The Russian merchant can get in no supplies from Russia, while the Japanese are continually renewing their stores from home. The Bolsheviks, when they came in, did all in their power to make it impossible for the Russian tradesman to exist. What will happen when a stable Government comes I do not know, but the changes here described must have an important bearing on the future of Siberia.

There was, however, another political change still more significant. For some time after the Revolution, England was trumps. Wherever an Englishman went, he was treated with especial consideration. It seemed as if people felt that

England guaranteed the Revolution, and that, with England behind them, their liberties were safe. It is difficult for people in England to realize how important an advantage this was. The educated Russian is drenched in German influence. He learns German at school, and at the technical institutes he is forced to take a course of it every year. German universities are flooded with Russian students. The engineering, electrical, and chemical experts all speak German fluently and read German technical journals. With a knowledge of German I would undertake to sell any goods in Russia, even if I did not know a word of Russian. The Russians have a ridiculous habit of attributing everything foreign that is good to Germany. I once had the greatest difficulty in convincing a Russian lady that "King Lear" was not by Schiller. She thought something so good must be German. German art, German music, the German theatres, German scholarship and science, German trade dominate in Russia, and to a large extent educated Russia looks at Europe through German spectacles. Now, all this strongly entrenched position of inveterate prejudice and age-old tradition seemed to have been won by us at a blow. England was the hero of the hour. German was banished from schools and universities and its place taken by English. If England had been able to make proper use of her opportunity, she might still

hold in Russia the commanding position she has held for centuries in Portugal.

I should like to allow myself a brief digression on the commercial importance of Siberia. One can only speak of it in superlatives. In the Government of Irkutsk alone, besides the forests, fisheries, and agricultural produce, there are coal, iron, molybdenite, copper, lead, silver, gold, immense beds of salt, marble, naphtha. The Americans and Japanese know all about these things, but very few English do. Our most common English book of reference contains these sentences: "In Siberia, Tomsk, Irkutsk, and Ekaterinburg have each about 50,000 inhabitants. Nijni-Novgorod, though small, is a station on the trans-Siberian railway" ("Whitaker's Almanack"). The fact is that Tomsk, Omsk, and Irkutsk have well over 100,000 inhabitants, Vladivostok over 90,000, Novonikolaievsk, Chita, Blagoviestchensk well over 50,000. Nijni-Novgorod is not on the trans-Siberian railway at all, but is the terminus of a short branch-line. Ekaterinburg is in European Russia. If our chief English book of reference is so hopelessly inaccurate and inadequate, no wonder that English merchants have failed to realize the importance of Siberia.

For a brief space, then, England held a commanding position in the future granary, mine, and workshop of the world. She was ousted from it by the joint German and Bolshevik propaganda.

Unscrupulous propaganda is the chief and practically the only weapon of Bolshevism, and through it they mean to conquer the whole civilized world. They do not rely so much on newspapers as on rumours. These are whispered from ear to ear, half in secret, their origin is not always apparent, and so they gain an authority which nothing in print could ever hope for. When Brusiloff made his effort in 1917, the Bolsheviks spread the report that he was a bad general, and that it was a great strategical error to advance as he did, he ought to have gone and retaken Warsaw. This criticism was heard all over the town, and when the news of his failure came through, everybody was ready with his "I told you so."

I was able to watch the propaganda in the 12th Regiment from near at hand. After the abortive July rising in Petrograd, an emissary came to the regiment direct from Lenin. His antecedents were interesting. He said he had been a schoolmaster, a prisoner of war in Germany, and had been put to work on the land near the Dutch border. He had escaped over to Holland and got back to Russia just in time to take part in the rising at Petrograd. After its failure he was sent to Irkutsk to prepare the ground for a similar rising. How much of his story was true I do not know, but at any rate he came from Germany and spoke German. He never made any secret of the Bolshevik plans—they were to

bring the Government to its knees by spreading ruin and devastation. If nothing else would do, they would cut the railway line between Russia and Siberia, and so starve Russia out. If one told him tales of Russia's miserable condition, he used to snap his fingers for joy and say, "You wait. It is going to be worse yet." He used to murmur terrible prophecies of the catastrophes to come—every time with a Satanic glee at the prospect he was unrolling before us. Don't let any of my readers imagine that this is a bygone tale of some old unhappy far-off thing. The Bolsheviks are at this moment applying the same methods wherever they can get a chance to work. The organization of disaster—that is their aim. They want to stir up such a fury of discontent as shall make the masses rise and sweep the capitalists off the face of the earth. Why these fires in London, destroying so much food? These strikes in the great grain-ports—New York, Buenos Ayres, Monte Video? Just as they were prepared to starve Russia out, so also they want to bring the whole world to its knees by famine.

Our Bolshevik at Irkutsk was often in danger of arrest, but the soldiers plainly told their officers that they would be shot if anything happened to the agitator. To the rank and file he preached friendship with Germany and peace—a separate peace, of course. He used to magnify Germany's

power, and say the failures at the front arose, not from Bolshevik cowardice, but from Germany's immense technical superiority. He used to frighten them with tales of German scientists and what they could invent. If the soldiers said a separate peace was dangerous because of Japan, he used to answer, "No, that didn't matter, Germany would not let Japan take Siberia." In time two parties in the regiment were clearly marked—the real soldiers and the Bolsheviks. The real soldiers remained very anti-German, and were unfriendly to the prisoners of war. The Bolsheviks, on the other hand, used to creep up to the prisoners and say, "You are our friends, you won't let anything happen to us, will you?" When the Battalions of Death were formed, they were laughed at as fools. And when the other soldiers were ordered to the front, they had their explanation ready. "You are going to die," they said, "because Kerenski has been bought by the English. He has received millions of pounds to continue the war. You will shed your blood not for Russia but to fill his pockets." And the soldiers used to march away, their hearts filled with anger and disgust against England and Kerenski. I have never seen a more miserable sight than the Russian troops marching off to the front in 1917. They dragged themselves along, sullen, gloomy, almost abject in their despair, obviously torn between craven fear of the

battlefield and rage at the men who were sending them there.

At the same time other means were used to bring them definitely over to the Bolsheviks. Everything the Russian peasant held dear was represented as in danger from Kerenski. They were told that, once the Bolsheviks were in power, they could take whatever they had a fancy to. Only those who know the dense stupidity and ignorance of the Russian peasant can imagine how quickly this propaganda took effect. The soldiers had no idea of the issues involved in the war; they were fighting simply becauset hey had to. When the news of Korniloff's advance on Petrograd came, a soldier said to me, "Where is this Petrograd that everybody is talking about? Is it in England or in Germany?" He was from the Manchurian frontier, and the very vastness of his country prevented him from forming any idea of it.

Propaganda was conducted among educated people along much the same lines. Numbers of pamphlets appeared attacking England's colonial policy—England in Egypt, England in Ireland, and so on. These were invariably based on German sources, and were no doubt paid for by German money. The attacks on Capitalism and Imperialism were directed against the English or American varieties, never against the German. The most absurd lies were spread about the price

America was demanding for the help she was willing to give Russia. The Y.M.C.A. suffered especially from these agitators. I shall never forget hearing a Russian gentleman tell his wife some details of the Y.M.C.A. work in Irkutsk. "But, my dear," said his wife, "why do you allow them to work among the soldiers? They only come to sell their goods." The husband tried to explain, but his wife would not listen. "You are much too simple and trusting," she insisted. "Anybody could make a fool of you. Every one knows that the Y.M.C.A. is a big American firm, and that its agents are simply commercial travellers here to push their goods." Some Bolshevik papers were served by German correspondents, and articles, word for word the same, appeared simultaneously in German and Russian newspapers. That the Bolsheviks were in receipt of German money they themselves never denied. A member of the Petrograd Soviet acknowledged it to a friend of mine. "Well, then," said my friend, "you are a spy." "No," said the Bolshevik; "we would take money from the devil, if we could get it." It was especially curious to watch the attitude of the Bolshevik press towards Henderson. So long as he was in Russia they could not find words bad enough for him. Only his quarrel with Lloyd George made him a hero. Then he became a stick to beat the English with. And even so his appearance was against him. I showed

some Bolsheviks a portrait of Henderson, which had just appeared in an English magazine. He was smiling, dapper, and neat, and as fresh as a rose. Everything about him was fresh, his linen spotless, his clothes well brushed, his boots polished to a bright shine, and he had evidently washed and shaved that day—all things abhorred of your Bolshevik. "Why," they said, "he's not a Socialist, he's a Bourgeois!" And in their eyes Henderson was done for. I think if we send any more Socialist delegates to Russia, it would be well to let their hair and nails grow first, and also to take their razors and soap away from them. Then they might have some chance. When Lenin wanted a disguise to secure him from Kerenski's men, he used to have a shave.

All the propaganda that was going on was sure to take effect, and in September the Bolsheviks tried their first revolution. Their plan was simple. The two infantry regiments which lay outside the town were to march into the town and unite with the regiments there in overturning the Government. After that the rule of the Soviets was to be proclaimed. All this could not be arranged so secretly that the authorities should not hear of it. The General Commanding-in-Chief came up in his car in order personally to see the men and hear their complaints. He was promptly arrested. The soldiers then held a meeting to consider the situation. I was present and recognized on the

platform certain officers of the regiment. It was decided to march off into the town, and I thought that, as a matter of course, the officers would go with them and march at their head. But not a bit of it.

The resolutions having been confirmed with a blood-curdling yell, the officers disappeared. Just as the soldiers were on the point of starting, there came on the scene two hundred and fifty Younkers (Officers' Training Corps). They took up a position barring the way to the town, and proceeded to demand the release of the general, the surrender of all arms, and that the ringleaders should be named to them. The left wing of the Younkers rested for a time on our garden, and it was a pleasure to see the smartness of their evolutions. They were real soldiers confronting sham ones. For though this small handful of troops had in front of them a regiment some thousands strong, and on their right flank another regiment, they won the day. It is true that they had two field guns, but these could easily have been rushed by determined soldiers. After some hours' parleying (extremely anxious for us, who would have been in the thick of any fighting) the Bolsheviks gave in entirely. As I have said before, their officers had disappeared at the very beginning, and most of their other ring-leaders ran away when they saw things were getting serious. Of those who were caught, one

had his pockets stuffed with pornographic literature and he was wearing women's underclothing; another had thousands of pounds on him, a remarkable thing in a common soldier; while a third was a notorious criminal who had the murder of two whole families on his conscience. I had always regarded as a stupid libel the favourite Conservative assertion that the Socialist leaders incite their followers to revolt and then keep out of harm's way themselves, but here was evidence too damning. With my own eyes I saw the officers stir the men up to revolt, I saw the officers walk off before the trouble began, and next day, not knowing what I had seen, these same men told me that the whole affair had been got up by a few misguided fanatics and cowards, and that it was very much to be deplored.

CHAPTER XI

THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT

SUCH a fiasco would have been enough to discredit the movement in any other country. But the Bolsheviks die hard, and they are quick to profit, not only by other people's mistakes, but by their own. They saw that it was useless to attempt anything in Irkutsk without getting the artillery over to their side. So they set to work systematically to detach each battery from its allegiance to the Provisional Government. I used to hear through the German agent how they were getting on, how first one battery and then another succumbed, till at last only one was left on which the authorities could rely. In time this also was won over. The work required patience, and it was not until Christmas week that the Bolsheviks were ready to turn out the Government. The officers in the army, of course, knew what was happening, but they were powerless. In any case they were not trained political agitators, and they had received no political education. They knew little of the lives of their men, they had no especial sympathy with their desires for more freedom and power, and the inner meaning of what was going on before their eyes escaped

them. It will probably be so in every army infected by Bolshevik agitators. From the outset their privileges, and the distance enjoined by their rank, handicap the officers in dealing with these men.

As usual, treachery was everywhere. Kerenski had sent down an emissary with instructions to watch the situation for him. The man's name was Strendberg, which looks German-Jewish, but he professed to be a Finn. He spoke German fluently; but when the Allied officers came to Irkutsk to investigate the arming of the prisoners of war, he denied that he knew a word of German. After the Revolution he acknowledged that he had played Kerenski false, and had used his influence to pervert the army still more thoroughly. The Bolsheviks rewarded him by making him their Commander-in-Chief for a time. It is curious that the German prisoners of war at Krasnoyarsk had planned an insurrection to take place on the very day that fighting began at Irkutsk. A War Staff had been formed, every German officer had his task assigned to him, and if the coup had succeeded, it must have thrown the whole of Siberia into confusion. A Russian officer, who understood German, overheard the prisoners speaking about it and reported the matter to Irkutsk. The last act of the Provisional Government was to take severe measures to punish the offenders, and to make a repetition of the offence

impossible. If it was a coincidence, it was surely a most remarkable one, that the Germans should have hit upon the same date as the Bolsheviks for their rising.

Meanwhile everybody knew what was coming, and people began to get very nervous. The most ordinary thing was enough to start a panic. At the sound of machine-guns practising I have seen a crowd gather and then, taken by a sudden impulse, run like a flock of sheep, they knew not where. During these long months all classes of society displayed a feverish gaiety. Never were the streets so full, the theatres and cinematographs so crowded, or the shops so busy. Money seemed to have no value except to purchase one more pleasure, before the time when there would be no pleasures at all. I shall not easily forget the evening when there came a lying telegram that Venice had fallen. The people in the streets acclaimed the news with shouts of wild laughter, and they could not have been merrier if their own army had taken Berlin. It was not so much want of sympathy for Italy, as extreme nervousness finding some excuse for expression. The sword of Damocles hung above our heads, and nobody knew when or upon whom it would fall. Ordinary good-byes in those days had something of the solemnity of an eternal farewell. The afternoon before the fighting began, I had been giving a lesson in the town and was

taking leave of the family. They asked the usual question, "When will you come again?" A silence fell upon us. Who knew if we should ever meet again?

The storm broke at last. The Bolsheviks occupied the chief Government institutions and issued an ultimatum to the Younkers and Cossacks to deliver up their arms. As this was equivalent to saying, "Dilly, Dilly, come and be killed," the invitation was refused and the fighting began. On one side were a thousand Younkers and Cossacks armed with rifles and machine-guns; on the other, twenty thousand Bolshevik soldiers and Red Guards, supported by four batteries of Field Artillery, some heavy howitzers, and a number of siege guns. Between these unequal forces the battle raged for ten days. The Younkers had possession of a few brick and stone buildings near the river Angara. The Cossacks were in their wooden barracks, and they afterwards took a children's hospital commanding their position. The Bolsheviks were everywhere else. The Younkers showed great bravery in attack. At the third attempt they stormed the bridge over the Angara and blew it up, thus preventing reinforcements from reaching the Bolsheviks by this route. They also took the White House, the largest and strongest building in Irkutsk. Here they captured some of the leading members of the Soviet, whom, however, they treated with perfect courtesy. The

cowardice of the Bolshevik soldiers was appalling. At the White House some ran and hid themselves in cellars and some in the lofts, while others reported themselves sick. It was a building which ten men could have held against a thousand, and which need never have been taken at all. The Younkers asked one lot of prisoners why they were fighting so badly. "Well," answered the soldiers, "we are only fighting because we are ordered to." "Aren't you Bolsheviks, then?" "No, nothing of the sort." "Would you fight for the Czar?" "Yes, certainly, if we were ordered to." The Bolshevik theory of equality between officers and men worked out as it always will do under stress of actual danger. On one occasion two scouts were wanted to carry a message across a valley infested with Cossacks. A whole company refused, one after the other. At last the only two educated men in the ranks volunteered. They had held back, not out of cowardice, but merely because they had been doing all the dangerous work for the company since the fighting began. It was interesting to watch the Bolshevik general with his men. They used to come slouching in from patrol and the general would try to get a report from them. He had to put on a jovial, hail-fellow-well-met air and clap them heartily on the back, saying, "Now, comrade, what have you been doing with yourself?" The comrade might, or might not, have seen something

of the enemy. Then the general, with extreme politeness, as of a shopwalker conducting a lady to the silk-counter, would suggest, "Now, comrade, do you think you could just go and have a look along those houses over there?" "Oh no," said the soldiers, "we are hungry, comrade. We must go and have our dinner." And the poor general had to wait about in the cold, until he could coax or wheedle some soldier into doing that bit of patrol for him.

We were privileged to be in the thick of the fighting. Our house was the nearest of the regimental buildings to the Cossacks and the most exposed to danger. On the first night a desperate struggle took place half a mile to the north of us, where the Cossacks tried to rush a Bolshevik battery. In our courtyard the air was alive with the singing of bullets, but this did not prevent us from paying or receiving visits. And then, amid the thunder of artillery, the rattle of machine-guns, and all the tumult of a battle, a report was brought to us that a mad dog in the neighbourhood had broken loose and bitten a woman, and therefore it was not advisable for us to venture out of doors! This anti-climax was too much for us, and we gave way to helpless laughter. Next morning we were in a more serious mood. During breakfast we noticed a Bolshevik soldier crouching down under our window. We asked him what he was doing. He explained that in the night

the Cossacks had driven them back and that our house was now the foremost point in the Bolshevik line. We went out to have a look, and could see the Cossacks converging in upon us, while just behind our garden the Bolsheviks were advancing in open order. With all possible speed we packed a few things together and made our way through the Bolshevik lines to the barracks, bullets whistling past our ears, or burying themselves with a dull thud in the snow as we passed. At the barracks we found the remaining officers of the regiment, and their families, assembled. Those officers, who did not choose to fight for the Bolsheviks, could declare themselves neutral and were not molested. If they asked any questions, the soldiers simply ignored them. Some officers were really active on the side of the Bolsheviks; but the soldiers would not listen to their advice, with the result that hundreds of lives were lost.

In spite of the stupidity and cowardice of the Bolsheviks, the bravery of the Younkers was of little avail, as the numbers against them were too overwhelming. The town was ringed in with a girdle of fire; night and day the batteries poured down upon it an unending rain of shell. I climbed on the top story of the barracks in order to follow the results of the shooting, and saw what I would give much to forget. An especial target of the Bolsheviks was the children's hospital occupied by the Cossacks. We could see the shells strike

it, smashing in the windows and tearing great holes in the fabric, while, from the other end of the building, the children were being carried away as quickly as possible. Not all the children were saved. Great columns of smoke and fire rose unceasingly from all parts of the town, and it seemed as if nothing could survive that bombardment. After their day's work the cannoneers, a horrible glee shining through the grime on their faces, used to go home snapping their fingers and dancing with triumph, carried beyond themselves with the lust of blood and sheer joy of destruction. In that weird setting, the red light of burning houses tingeing all the atmosphere, their dark, leaping figures seemed like devils straight from hell.

The Younkers were caught in a trap and their fate appeared certain. However, the Consuls interfered, and secured an end of fighting on honourable terms. The Younkers were to lay down their arms and to receive a safe-conduct to their homes. The Bolsheviks pledged themselves to retain only certain of their younger classes under arms, the rest were to be demobilised, and, like the Younkers, sent home. The fighting had cost the lives of about two thousand men. The numbers of the wounded will never be known, because many of the officers and others of the bourgeoisie, concealed their wounds out of fear of revenge. Even schoolboys had stolen away

to take part in the fighting. Afterwards they crept back to their families again, and only their immediate friends knew anything about it.

After so long a bombardment, I expected to find Irkutsk laid waste. But, on the whole, surprisingly little damage was done. Certain buildings held by the Younkers had been battered about, one or two schools and a printing establishment had been burnt outright. The soldiers had plundered and then set fire to Vtorova's—the Harrod's of Irkutsk. There was also some miscellaneous bombardment of houses in which lived capitalists obnoxious to the Bolsheviks. This was mean and dastardly, but fortunately the shooting was very bad, and the houses suffered little. Considering that the town was quite at the mercy of a victorious and revolutionary soldateska, it came off marvellously well. The soldiers looted whatever houses they were quartered in, but there was little forcible entry. One Jewish tradesman told me how a party of soldiers broke into his shop and demanded food. He was in great fear of the Bolsheviks, and thought they were going to rob him of all he possessed. But they only took thirty pounds of sausage, and left him without troubling about anything else. He was amused, because the sausages happened to be "kosher," and contained no pork at all. I am the more inclined to insist on the comparative moderation of the soldiers, because the most

alarming reports of the Irkutsk fighting have appeared in American and English magazines. Here is a specimen. In an article which appeared in *Harper's* and the *Fortnightly* for November, 1918, an American journalist says that a Russian gave him the following account of the fight: "We had a nice little fuss here in January at the time the Red Guards captured the city. Some of the finest buildings were shelled. Three thousand citizens lost their lives after a terrible siege in the public museum. Several Englishmen and Americans were killed." Scarcely one of these statements is true; in fact, the passage is pure invention on the face of it. The fighting took place, not in January, but in December. Only two thousand fell altogether, of these few were non-combatants, and not a single one was American or English.

One non-combatant certainly was foully murdered. This was the Socialist-Revolutionary Patlych. He was one of the great champions of Socialism, and he had repeatedly suffered under the Czar for his opinions. All who knew him respected him for the firmness with which he had borne hardship, and for the unspoiled kindliness of his nature. Conceiving a great horror of bloodshed, he took no part in the fighting, but worked for the Red Cross among the wounded. After a time it occurred to him that he might be able to put a stop to the slaughter by ascertaining the

terms on which the parties were prepared to negotiate. Accompanied by a friend, he first went to the Younkers, who received him politely, and communicated to him their terms. Afterwards he went to the Bolsheviks, who treated him with great harshness and suspicion. At last they took him to their leaders—three common soldiers who refused to have anything to do with him. He was led back through the Bolshevik lines, and then suddenly shot from behind. His friend managed to escape, although the Bolsheviks did their best to kill him too, in order to get rid of an inconvenient witness. Patlych received a public funeral, the most imposing that I have seen in Russia, and Russia is a land of imposing funerals. All classes of society joined in showing their respect to the great Socialist, and even the Bolsheviks had the insolence to follow in the procession. But they did nothing to punish his murderers. I have mentioned the crime because it is so characteristic of the Bolshevik system. They have been extolled by certain journalists as having discovered a new principle of universal benevolence and the world-wide brotherhood of the working-man. An American journalist, C. E. Russell, has written a book, "Unchained Russia," in which he sweetly discourses on the loving-kindness of the Bolsheviks. And yet we find them murdering a fellow-socialist only because his opinions were a shade less red than their

own. Their doctrine is not one of love, but of hate, and much as they hate the capitalist, they hate other Socialists far more. Family quarrels are always the bitterest, and the lot of the Socialists has been harder under the Bolsheviks than it ever was under the Czar.

One final touch of horror, and I have done with horrors. I only mention it as it is characteristic of that Russian morbidity of temperament which Englishmen find it so hard to understand. After the fighting was ended, the dead bodies were collected and stacked in various public buildings. For days this was one of the sights of Irkutsk, and people flocked to see it. Corpses of men, women, and children were piled in heaps for every one to look at. You could see fashionable women daintily lifting their skirts and picking their way between the dead bodies, or young girls and boys staring with naïve curiosity at the sight. In one building the room of the Army Paymaster was requisitioned, and he used to sit at his desk, faced by a wall of dead bodies, while men and women came to receive their money. The prisoners of war went too, and vowed that never should a revolution cause such scenes in Germany; they were prepared to suffer anything rather than that.

We thus see Bolshevism sitting throned on a pile of dead bodies. Since so many people are still inclined to regard the movement as to some

extent an expression of the people's will, it may be interesting to state exactly how the Bolsheviks came into power. It was only through the soldiers, and these soldiers they won over to their side only by the promise of peace. The elections for the Constituent Assembly at Irkutsk just before the second Revolution showed that the Bolsheviks had no following except in the army. The soldiers were bitterly hated by the people. I have seen peasant women shake their fists in the soldiers' faces and curse them for the disasters they had brought on Russia. The soldiers merely laughed and shouted, "Peace, peace." Many of the demobilized soldiers, when they arrived at their homes, were shot by the peasants. Once the Bolsheviks were in power, the soldiers insisted on their promises being kept and on being demobilized. They were implored to stay and fight for the good old cause of Socialism; but they answered roughly, "We are not Socialists. We are Bolsheviks." They had not the slightest notion what the Bolsheviks were, and if you had told them they were extreme Monarchists, it would have made no difference, so long as they brought peace. A list of volunteers was opened at Irkutsk, and only fifty men enrolled themselves. The Bolsheviks began to feel the disadvantages of the Soldiers' Councils they had created. The new Government issued an order that the demobilized soldiers were to give up their equipment and

rifles. The Soldiers' Councils met and passed a resolution that each soldier was free to take his equipment home with him. Soldiers were willing to sell their rifles for a song, and the bourgeois were thus enabled to equip themselves for the next struggle with the Bolsheviks. The most amazing scenes took place. A friend of mine was approached by a soldier and asked what he would give for a machine-gun. He thought the whole affair was a joke, and answered quite gravely that he had got in a sufficient stock of machine-guns for the summer, but he was rather short of field artillery. The soldier said he would talk to his comrades about it, and next day actually returned with an offer to steal and sell a field-gun at a stated price. The bargain was concluded, and although the Bolsheviks searched high and low for it, they never found where the gun was hidden. Government and regimental stores were openly plundered. The second-hand market was full of them for weeks. Sugar to the value of thousands of pounds was stolen from the 12th Regiment. One night the sentry set to guard the regimental chest disappeared, taking with him a month's pay for the whole regiment. Such things as the Bolsheviks particularly wanted to keep were removed from the different storehouses to a common centre. On the way the waggons openly stopped at the second-hand market and a certain proportion of the stores

was sold. So badly was the Bolshevik State organized that these thefts were never discovered by the officials in control, the reason being that they were mostly ignorant soldiers who could not even count. Bolshevism, as conceived by its leaders, may be something great and exhilarating. But the Bolsheviks were put into power by the soldiers, and the soldiers only wanted two things —peace and opportunities for plunder.

Conspiracies were constantly being formed against them. In one of these, the town was divided into eight districts, each under its leader. The eight leaders knew one another, but in the separate districts each conspirator knew only his leader, and he did not know who else belonged to the cause. It behoved one in those days to guard carefully one's tongue. I had a pupil with whom I was on excellent terms, a business man in the town. He showed me the damage that the Bolsheviks had done to his house, without expressing an opinion about it, however. He did not know whether I might not be a Bolshevik spy. I, on the other hand, said nothing, because I had at last learned to hold my tongue. But one day during the lesson there came on a great fall of snow ; I had incautiously gone out without an overcoat, and he offered to lend me his to go back home in. It was the only one the Bolsheviks had left him, a musty, mouldy, old green thing, not worth the stealing. I put it on,

and the effect was too much for his caution. "Why," he said, "you look just like a Bolshevik!" Our laughter broke the ice, and we became fast friends.

The Bolsheviks had no means of satisfying the discontent of the people. They had little food, and did not know how to obtain more. The peasants absolutely refused to sell to them. The prisoners of war used to organize expeditions to the surrounding villages to buy flour. The peasants would at first regard them with suspicion, and deny that they had anything to sell. The prisoners used to protest that they were not Bolsheviks, they were only prisoners of war—and they got as much as they wanted. The Bolshevik army was crumbling to pieces, and scarcely a man was left. They managed in time to collect a few men—ne'er-do-wells, criminals, former policemen, and some of the unemployed—and with these they made up a kind of army. And on one pretext or another they disarmed the whole of the bourgeoisie. But they had no means of resisting any strong concerted effort to put them down. And then some one had the brilliant idea of organizing the prisoners of war.

I was able to follow this movement closely through all its stages until I left Irkutsk. I was at the first meeting called to discuss the question. The hall was filled with Austro-Hungarian and German prisoners of war, and with a miscellaneous

public of Red Guards, Bolsheviks, and their sympathizers. A president, vice-presidents, and various other officials were elected from among the prisoners. The Germans were conspicuous by their reserve, and held aloof. Nominally, the meeting was under the leadership of an Austrian, but it soon passed into the hands of a member of the Soviet called Izaaksohn. Whenever it appeared to be going off the rails, he brought it back, and kept it on what was obviously a definitely thought-out course. The feeling between the Germans and the Austrians was very bad, and was not improved by the taunts hurled at the former for their cowardice in not speaking out. Finally, a resolution was passed condemning the German Government in round terms for its greed and aggression, and declaring the intention of the meeting to form an association of prisoners of war. The misdeeds of Austria were altogether ignored in the resolution. Prisoners' Associations had been formed all over Siberia. At Stretensk the prisoners had torn the national cockade from their caps and replaced it with the red ribbon of the International. At Beresovka fighting had taken place between the Germans and the Hungarians, because the former still hung back. At Omsk the town was in the hands of the prisoners, who kept their officers in close confinement and had killed some of them. They also had the railway station in their power, and

would not allow any prisoners to return home. A prisoner could either become a member of the Omsk Red Guard or be sent back to where he came from. The new German Association declared that they would go home first and prepare the ground for the Revolution, and then the bourgeois could follow. The German Government thought otherwise. Not a single prisoner of war was allowed through the German lines. I know of one sergeant who escaped and reached the German lines in Central Russia. He was warned to go back, but he could not believe his ears; he thought the Germans would be certain to welcome their own men. He insisted on advancing, and was shot dead. Later in the summer I was informed that the Germans were shooting all returned prisoners who could be proved to have had anything to do with the Bolsheviks. The success of the Revolution in Germany proves that some, at any rate, managed to get through. The Austrians put their Bolsheviks in internment camps.

Meanwhile strange things were happening at Irkutsk itself. Although peace had been signed, prisoners of war from Russia were being concentrated at Irkutsk. Two or three hundred of them were armed and were set to guard not only their own encampment, but also the munition stores of the Bolsheviks. The Russians had no faith in their own men, and insisted on having Germans.

Many prisoners in the town were instructing the Red Guards and Anarchists in the various branches of war—artillery, cavalry, and the machine-gun. Two or three flying machines were brought to Irkutsk, to be flown, it was said, by German aviators. Transports of prisoners from the east were held up indefinitely in the town. They came with the soldiers, subject to military discipline as at the front. Within a day all that was changed. Saluting ceased and discipline existed no longer. In one case the leader of a transport was arrested because he was paying the officers more per day than the men. All his money, to the amount of several thousands of pounds, was taken from him. All the protocols that had been collected against the prisoners were destroyed. A German sergeant was killed in the streets of Irkutsk for refusing to remove the badges of his rank. The Allies took alarm at the concentration of such large armed forces, and sent officers to investigate the movement. They were put off with bare-faced lies. At a time when at least ten thousand prisoners were under arms, they were assured that only fifteen hundred of them were so. In April there was a great meeting of delegates from all the associations of prisoners in Siberia. The rules of membership were decided upon, and among them was the following: "The members are pledged to take up arms whenever the Central Committee calls upon them to do so, or if there is no time to

appeal to the Central Committee, whenever the Local Committee calls upon them to do so. In addition to those already enrolled in the Red Army, the Association gave the Bolsheviks an enormous number of men pledged to support them with arms when called upon. I say enormous advisedly. An Austrian with whom I talked reckoned the number at a million. This is certainly too large, but in any case the Association doubled, if it did not treble, the number of soldiers at the Soviet's disposal.

This propaganda soon made itself felt. Simeonof had been able to do what he liked with the Red Guards; they never stood up to him. The Bolshevik Commissar for Foreign Affairs made a despairing speech, in which he candidly admitted that the Red Army was worthless. The prisoners changed the aspect of affairs altogether, and without them the Bolsheviks would not have been able to resist either Simeonof or the Czecho-Slovaks. By means of their propaganda the Bolsheviks killed two birds with one stone. They obtained help against their enemies, they also undermined the capitalist states of Central Europe. They were cleverer than the Germans. Suppose that the Germans after the Kaiser's fall had treated our prisoners kindly, and preached to them the doctrines of Socialism. If it had been done in the proper way it might have been dangerous. But then the Russian Socialist

leaders were true to the International, and really desired some higher ideal than country to guide their class. The German worker will fight to get privileges for himself, but I never found that he had a feeling of community with the workers outside Germany. He preached the doctrine of hate as cordially as his officers.

With the idea of coaxing the prisoners into their association the Bolsheviks used to arrange "evenings" for them. There would be speeches, plays, some music, and, at the end of it all, dancing. The Anarchists always attended, and were easily the most interesting people present. Their leader was the man I have described in a previous chapter as having murdered two whole families. He was thought to be insane, and there was a horrible set stare in his eyes as if he were haunted by the ghosts of his victims. His manners seemed to indicate that among other laws to be abolished were those of good society. He used to come smoking a long thick pipe, and when he saw that any one was at the proper distance behind him, he used to swing round suddenly and hit the man a smack in the face with the hot bowl. Then his pipe used to be passed round from one to other of the Anarchists, and, with the terrible eye of their leader upon them, they would have to look as if they enjoyed it. The Bolsheviks did not quite know what to do with the Anarchists, as none of their hirelings were anxious to pull this

particular chestnut out of the fire for them. They gave a great deal of trouble. They once raided the Police Office and destroyed all the criminal records. On another occasion they surrounded the market, and after having fired into the air, stole everything they could grab in the panic that followed. At last the Bolsheviks hit upon the plan of sending them to fight Simeonof. They rode through the town in fine style, their band playing, their black flag flying, and a pleased crowd to see them off. But when the train reached the front scarcely an Anarchist was left. They had nearly all sold their rifles and run away *en route*.

Meanwhile the treaty with Germany had been signed and ratified, and German influence once more became dominant in Russia. German officers travelled up and down Siberia inspecting positions for defence. Under their directions, it was said, a great camp had been built on the River Selenga in order to hold up any advance from the east. At Irkutsk a building was got ready to house a staff of eighty German officers. From time to time prisoners of war occupied the telegraph office, took notes of all telegrams that had been sent, and for days together were in immediate communication with the Fatherland. German trade agents were busy in Irkutsk concluding contracts on terms which the Russians protested were very easy. Delivery of the goods was

promised for August, payment was to be in three instalments, the third not to be till a year after the close of war, and the rouble was to be taken at par. The rich merchant class, I found, were quite reconciled to the separate peace, since it gave them an opportunity of trading with Germany. They violently objected to doing business with any one else. They understood the Germans and the Germans understood them. It is so all over Russia, and when the peace of the world is restored, the Russian merchants will welcome the chance of returning to their German friends. Nearly all the newspapers wrote in the German interest. An account of the attack on Zeebrugge appeared in a Soviet newspaper under the heading, "How they lie." Even now German influence is still almost as strong as ever. Within the last month or two newspapers have been suppressed because of their rabid Anglophobia combined with pro-Germanism. At a certain Siberian town, when the English Consul gave to the local papers an account of the terms of the Armistice, they absolutely refused to print them. They declared that Germany would never assent to a fifth of those terms. And finally the Bolsheviks appointed as their Commander-in-Chief a German noble from Riga—Baron von Taube. How came a nobleman to be in that galley? The relations between the Bolsheviks and the Germans were hard to fathom. On the one hand, there was the

pro-German, anti-Entente propaganda of their newspapers, and the fact that some hundreds of German officers of high rank were in the Bolshevik service assuming control of operations. On the other hand, there was the Socialist, anti-monarchical propaganda among the prisoners, which must have been extremely distasteful to the German Government. With characteristic perfidity the Bolsheviks were trying to make the best of both worlds, taking from the Capitalist Governments what they were willing to give, and using the breathing-space they gained in order to undermine Capitalism everywhere. But it is still not clear how far the German Government was ready to go, and whether they would have allowed all the prisoners to be armed and sent to the Japanese front. The concentration of prisoners at Irkutsk could not have taken place without their consent, and it must have meant something. It seems very much as if the recent sudden activity in the Bolshevik armies was due to a German brain. This vigorous and successful fighting north, east, south and west points to a superior intellect at work somewhere. And the Bolsheviks have shown no such military genius in their campaigns that one might expect it to come from them.

Meanwhile in this nest of German intrigue my position became very difficult. I have not dwelt at length upon my reasons for severing my connection with Germany. I think they will be

obvious to any civilized person. In renouncing my allegiance I left all I possessed in the hands of the Germans, so that any rate I did not get the best of the bargain. In the circumstances I went to the English Consul, explained to him how I stood, and that I feared that I might be made to fight for Germany or the Bolsheviks in the immediate future, and asked him for a paper enabling me to get out of Russia. There followed weary months of waiting while we telegraphed to the Home Government. The Bolsheviks delayed all and suppressed half of what we tried to send. At last a wire arrived announcing that British protection was to be accorded to me. But that was only half the battle, the more strenuous half was with the Soviet. They absolutely refused to let me go. The British Consul at Irkutsk had a great name with them; they were more afraid of him than of all the other consuls put together. When they heard that he was interested in a matter, they used to give up resistance to him as a bad job. But in my case some influence stiffened them, and they were obstinate. Not that they wished me ill. With that touch of topsy-turvydom, which is never absent from Russian affairs, they urged the Consul to let me escape. "Why doesn't he escape?" they said. "It is quite easy." And it was—for Germans. Meanwhile I was spied on wherever I went. In the morning when I went down to the Consul's, a tall Austrian

officer used to pick me up and march behind me with set military pace until I had "reached my objective." Afterwards he would follow me home again, keeping exactly the same distance all the while. His countenance was so lean and mournful that I could not help christening him "Don Quixote." But I was sorry for the Austrians; I thought they had more brains than to spy like that. Then, quite unexpectedly, the Central Soviet at Moscow telegraphed that I was to be allowed to go. I have since found out that it was through a lucky misunderstanding.* Anyhow the Irkutsk people at last gave me a licence to travel. But my troubles were not over yet. The stations all along the line were picketed with prisoners of war, whose business it was to see that only the right prisoners escaped. They cared nothing for the Soviet's licence. At other stations there were Red Guards whose business it was to see that no one left Russia too rich. Our journey was full of thrills, but fortunately without adventure. We only just escaped, however. We wanted to leave the train and go down the river by boat from Stretensk; but as our passports said nothing about this route, the local Soviet would not allow us to go. We watched

* The author is not yet aware of the fact, that, though there was a lucky misunderstanding, there was also a campaign led by a member of the Society of Friends, to secure his release. This Friend, who is still unknown to him, secured the interest, first of our Foreign Office, and then of the Moscow Soviet, in his behalf, and made his escape possible.

the others depart with envy and regret. That boat was held up by brigands, and the passengers robbed of all they possessed. At other times it is a journey I can recommend—especially in May. Once more the hills were purple with rhododendron, and the woods were deep with a profusion of wild flowers, all the prettier for being unknown. At last one evening our train ran down into Vladivostok, and we saw again the sea, and the *Suffolk* flying the English flag.

I have tried in these papers to avoid as much as possible questions of principle, and without malice or favour to relate what my experiences were. To some I may appear like those Catholic historians, who think that they have demolished the Reformation when they have proved the land-hunger of the great Protestant nobles, or like the Protestants, who imagine that they have demonstrated the absurdity of Catholicism when they have made out a list of the crimes of the Borgias. What I have said has scarcely anything to do with first principles. The Revolution will fail, as all Revolutions fail, in that it will be followed by a violent reaction apparently sweeping away every trace of its existence. The Revolution will succeed, as all Revolutions succeed, in that it has planted an idea in men's minds, where it is inviolable, and in due time it will ripen and bring forth fruit an hundredfold. I should be sorry if it should be thought that I have done an injustice

to Russia. There is no country so difficult for an Englishman to understand. Nothing is certain about it except its surprises. The Russians are as muddle-headed and stupid as the Englishman of a *Daily Mail* nightmare, and as quick in perception and polished as a Frenchman, as fond of tea and talk as an Oriental, as open-minded, acute, and subtle as an Athenian, as lazy as a Spaniard, as passionate as an Italian, as cold at heart and calculating as an Irishman, honest, simple, and kindly as the German of the good old fairy tales, yet, in their wrath, as brutal as the Tartars from whom they spring, and, in revenge, as cunning and implacable as a Jew, capable in one and the same person of superb devotion and repellent treachery, dreamers and idealists, yet with a terrible gift of clear vision, especially with regard to themselves, in the highest examples of the race the body all fire and the brain all light, the inheritors of a language the most flexible, persuasive, and harmonious ever moulded by the lips of man—how could I do justice to them? There is no need to fear for Russia. When, in the words of Shelley's famous chorus, the world's great age begins anew and the golden years return, Russia, made alive in every part of her by the struggle for freedom, is sure to take a giant's share in the building up again of our shattered universe.

APPENDIX

WHAT BOLSHEVISM MEANS

We have read so much in the last day or two about Bolshevism being established in Europe, that it is worth while inquiring how it really works. The accounts of it that have as yet appeared, speak only of the murders and robberies. I wish in this article to ignore their bloodshed and simply to state what the Bolsheviks' ideals are, and what is the result when these ideals are put into practice.

Bolshevism is a term which may be translated as "Maximalism." The Bolsheviks demand the maximum of Socialism, are the Socialists "whole hoggers." They start from the theory that the middle classes are incapable of rule, and that only two classes can govern the country—the capitalists or the workmen. Since it has to be one of the two, they are determined it shall be the workmen. Their watchword is not freedom for all, but the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, the tyranny of one class of society above all the others.

Their organ of government is the Soviet. Lenin boasts that the day of Parliaments has passed, and that he has discovered something better, which will take their place all over the

world. A Soviet is simply a Council. Its constituencies are the various Trades Unions, who elect members in proportion to their numbers. The Soviet in turn appoints Commissars who correspond to our Ministers of State. Exactly how the Commissars are all made to go in the same direction I do not know. Lenin spent a good deal of time last year in writing articles to prove that a President was as useless as a King, and that no formal head of a Government is necessary. From what I have heard, the absence of a formal head only leads to a series of intrigues between conflicting parties, which very much hamper government while they continue, and generally result in some dominant personality attaining the leadership and filling up the chief posts with creatures of his own.

The franchise, which is supposed to include all those who work for their living, is a shamelessly artificial one. To take but one instance. In Irkutsk the Bolsheviks found themselves in a minority in the Soviet. They thereupon declared that the franchise must be changed, it was too bourgeois. They succeeded in carrying through a new principle—that the franchise should belong to "physical labour" only. All such occupations as demanded education were ruled out. Some of the more enlightened Bolsheviks tried to obtain the vote for elementary school-teachers, but they were shouted down.

Similar gerrymandering has taken place in every part of Russia. There is another peculiarity about the Soviets. They are elected by physical labour; but who controls them? In no case members of the working-classes. Lenin's principle is that the working-man is too stupid to know what is good for him, and he must be told what to do. Soviet rule is a system by which a handful of political adventurers first impose themselves on a party and then impose this party on the State.

Bolshevism is a tyranny, and like all other tyrannies has great need of secrecy. Do not let any English readers run away with the idea that because Lenin published the secret agreements of Kerenski, he is therefore an enemy of secret diplomacy himself. He concluded the treaty of Brest-Litovsk with Germany, and the Russian people to this day do not know all that it pledged them to. At Irkutsk reporters had no right to be present at the debates of the Soviet, and such reports as did appear were officially prepared and often issued a month late. At that time Irkutsk was on the verge of starvation, and it was necessary to put heart in the people with a promise of plenty. So from time to time the Soviet officially stated that they had reached an agreement with China by which the frontier was to be opened. These statements were deliberate untruths. In a Parliament it would have been

possible to force a debate on this point and make the Government explain why the frontier was still closed and declare its policy. In view of the fact that the Union of Democratic Control, the *Manchester Guardian*, Lee Smith, and others of that kidney have been such staunch supporters of the Bolsheviks, it is extremely important to realize that under Soviet rule there is no democratic control at all, and worse secrecy than there ever was under the Czar.

To turn to commerce and finance. The Bolsheviks call themselves Communists, and aim at the abolition of private property. Land may neither be bought nor sold. When you die all your property goes to the State, and while you are alive the State may take from you what it pleases. Nothing is yours; all is the State's. The effete Parliaments of the West generally estimate their expenditure for the coming year, and plan their taxation accordingly. Not so the Soviet. They do indeed levy taxes, but they are always in want of money. Their plan is simple; they go to the nearest rich man, and "touch" him for the amount. From one man alone at Irkutsk they had obtained £15,000 in three months. In many towns they had bled the rich white, and were beginning on the middle classes. Whatever they wanted, they took—houses, furniture, cattle, horses, motor-cars—without any compensation. If you were ruined, you were brutally told to go

and work with your hands. In one town, where they took a house with all that was in it, the lady had just got in a stock of underclothing for the summer. Not conceiving what use these things could be to the Soviet, she petitioned that they might be handed over to her. She was told that it was impossible, as the articles in question had already been "nationalized."

Everything was nationalized. It began with the banks. You could get money to pay your workmen with, but if you wanted it for anything else you needed the licence of the Soviet. You became the slave of the Soviet, and could spend nothing except as they directed you. This power was mercilessly used to crush opponents. All mines and factories were nationalized and passed completely into the control of the working-man. They lived on the capital of the firm, gave themselves high wages, and did no work. Most of the undertakings had to be closed, and I did not hear that the working-men made a success of it in a single case. And they were far greedier than the capitalist. One Petrograd factory was making overshoes at a price to themselves of four roubles a pair. They put them on the market at forty-five roubles a pair. At the Cheremhovo coal-mines the miners voted themselves fifty roubles a day—whether they worked or not. As a result, all those public services which depended on Cheremhovo coal either showed a great deficit or

had to put their prices up, while private enterprises dependent on Cheremhovo coal could not continue. Munition factories, after peace was signed, simply refused to be shut down. They insisted on orders being given them to keep them at work. Where will you find things as bad as this in the worst days of Capitalism ?

To come to the Land Question. The Bolshevik formula is, "No one is to receive less than is sufficient to support a man and his family or more than a man and his family can cultivate." It puts a damper on all enterprise, sets the man of ambition and ability on the same level with the lazy and the stupid, and makes of the farmer a mere grubber of the soil. The Bolsheviks boast of having collected and distributed a large amount of agricultural machinery. But they have "collected" it from the rich farmers, who knew how to use it, and distributed it among the ignorant peasants who understand nothing about it at all. They have driven away the intelligent and educated men who were the backbone of Russian agriculture and in their place have put men who will not be able to get out of the land a quarter of what their predecessors did. The peasants are not grateful, but hate them intensely. The peasant wants to own his bit of land, he wants to be free to develop it, and he dearly loves the joy of battling with a dealer for a good price for his crops. None of these things are possible under the Socialists.

We come to Education. Here they have persecuted the teachers who would not acknowledge their power, and put them on the street to starve. In some Siberian towns they have declared that education makes people bourgeois, and that, therefore, all schooling must cease at the age of sixteen. At Vladivostok they are openly inciting their supporters to murder all students and professors. Everybody knows that if they were returned to power in Vladivostok not a single member of the Oriental Institute would be left alive. At the same time they are trying to make the stage and the cinematograph organs of Bolshevism. No play and no film is to be allowed that is not Bolshevistic in tendency. It is true that at Irkutsk they used to give "evenings" at cheap prices with the idea of providing the people with good intellectual fare. Mozart, Molière, and the classic Russians used to figure on the programme. But all they have done has been too one-sided and special. Education demands freedom, and that is the one thing they will not give.

One of the strangest Bolshevik novelties was their reform of judicial procedure. Laws, lawyers, and judges were abolished at one blow. You might be prosecuted for treason. Your judges would be chosen from the people to officiate for this occasion only, perhaps even they would not be able to read or write. The prosecuting counsel would be a man of the same type. You instructed

whoever you liked to appear for you. The court had to make law and find on the fact at the same time. Having established what you had done, they would proceed to deliberate as to whether it came within their idea of a crime. The public were invited to help them, and any one who chose might speak as long as he liked. Even schoolboys joined in. The proceedings were not so terrible for the defendant as might appear. He usually got a real lawyer to defend him, who could put his case skilfully. The representative of the Soviet was no match for him as a rule. Judges were lenient except to other Socialists and the Press. You were not always certain of being tried. The Bolsheviks would arrest a group of people on a charge of conspiracy and shoot them the same day. The absence of laws hit the Press very hard. All the organs obnoxious to the Bolsheviks were suppressed one by one. It was only too easy to convict a newspaper of sedition, if you made up the law on the subject afresh for each case.

These are just a few aspects of Bolshevik rule. In conclusion, I should like to give a concrete instance of how extreme Socialism works. A professional man at Irkutsk had by his talents and industry attained a distinguished position. Come the Bolsheviks, commandeer nearly all his rooms, and threaten to turn him out on the street and supplant him by one of their own men. When

he protests, they jeer and tell him he will still be able to work with his hands. That was not the worst. He had a wife and family, for whom he had saved some money. If he died, the Bolsheviks would immediately step in and take all he possessed, including even the insurance. His wife might get some sort of a pension; his daughters would have to stop going to school and become servants or waitresses; his son, perhaps, would also have to give up his education and might manage to get a job as a cab-driver. The Socialist says how splendid! The children of rich and poor on an equality at last! Yes, the lazy and extravagant placed on exactly the same level as the industrious and the thrifty. Whether you spend what you earn, or whether you save it, it is all the same for those who come after you. On this rock the artificial restrictions of Bolshevism are sure to split. You will never persuade a man that the State will look after those dear to him as well as he himself can. You cannot take from him the right of providing with the fruits of his labour for wife and child. He will resent, with the deepest and bitterest anger of which he is capable, any endeavour to rob him of these privileges, and to make the State sole arbiter of the destiny of his children.

INDEX

THE END

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